

Feby. 22



*The Right Hon.<sup>ble</sup> Patrick Hume Earl of  
Marchmont Viscount of Blasonberry Lord Polwarth  
Polwarth &c Lord High Chancellor of Scotland  
1702*

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Margaret Campbell

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Register of the Glasgow College

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THE *A. 16. 2*  
UNSEARCHABLE RICHES  
O F  
CHRIST,

And Of  
GRACE and GLORY  
In and thorow HIM.

Diligently Searched into, Clearly Unfolded,  
and Comfortably holden forth, in *Four-*  
*teen* Rich Gospel SERMONS Preached  
on several TEXTS, at Communions,  
in *Glasgow*.

---

By the late pious and Powerful Gospel Preacher in that  
City, Mr. *JAMES DURHAM*.

---

2 Joh. I. 3. *That which we have seen and heard declare  
we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us: and  
truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son  
Jesus Christ.*

1 Cor. 10 16. *The Cup of Blessing which we blesse, is  
it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The  
Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the  
Body of Christ.*

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GLASGOW, Printed by Robert Sanders, one of  
His Majesties Printers, 1685.





THE  
Epistle Dedicatorie

and Prefatorie.

To all Christians seriously pursuing Conformity unto Christ, and panting after Communion with God in him. Particularly the Inhabitants of the City of *Glasgow*, that are such: And in speciall to *Mistress Durham*, the Famous Authors worthy Relict and my Sister in Law, who hath had a singular care to preserve her deceased Husbands *Lectures* and *Sermons*, that they might be made forth-coming for the Publick use and Edification of the Church.

Dear Friends,

**A**DAM in Innocency and Integrity was in a state of perfect friendship with God, of beautifull conformity to His Image, and of sweetly Comfortable Communion with him; But alace! he continued very short time in that excellent state; for the entering in of sin, by his Transgressing the Law and condition of the Covenant of works, quite brake off the friendship, utterly disfigured and defaced the conformity, and altogether interrupted and put a stop to the Communion: He having thereby run himself and his Posterity under a forfeiture of that desireable state, and of all the Precious Priviledges annexed to it; under which himself and they had lyen Eternally, had not God in the depth of  
his

## The Epistle

his infinit wisdom, and in the exceeding and unsearchable Riches of his free Grace and Mercy, devised and found out a way for taking off that forfeiture, By sending his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, to Redeem them that were under the Law; who according to the Covenant of Redemption treated and Transacted, finally concluded and agreed betwixt Jehovah and him; having made a most costly, but a most Compleat Satisfaction to Provoked Divine Justice for the debt of the Elect, In whose room, for that end he did surrogat and substitute himself, as their Surety and Cautioner, hath reestablished the friendship, restored the Conformity, and recovered the Communion: of which Glad tidings of great joy Publication is made in the Preached Gospel: the Tabernacle of the Ordinances whereof is reared up amongst men, that thereby God the Lord may dwell among them: These Ordinances in their institution and nature being means of Communion and fellowship betwixt God and men: Amongst which Divinely instituted Ordinances, that of the Lords Supper beareth expressly the name of the Communion, because, often and ordinarily the greatest measures and highest degrees of Communion with God in Christ attainable by sojourning and militant Saints here on Earth, are win at in the Participation of that Ordinance: the great pledge and love-token of our dying Lords dearest respect to his Disciples and followers, calling and obliging them, in the use thereof, to a Solemn Commemoration of him and of his love, and to a Publick and avouched Declaration of his Death till he come again: Therefore is it beyond all other Gospell Ordinances, as it were, railed about with such injunctions, Cautions, and warnings; with such terrible threatnings, with such intimations of Atrocious Guilt, and with such denunciations of formidable Judgements against unworthy Communicants,



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municans, Thunder and Lightnings ( as it were ) being spoken against such. The desirable deceased Author of these few following Sermons Preached at Communion, used at such occasions to endeavour, through Grace, to rouse and work up himself to such a Divineness of frame, as very much suited the Spiritual state and Majesty of that Ordinance, greatly fearing lest himself, or any of the People to whom he dispensed the same, should fall under the grievous Guilt of the Body and Blood of the Lord; then, in a manner, his face shone, as being in the mount of Communion and fellowship with God, and at some of those Solemn and sweet Occasions, he spake some way as a man that had been in Heaven, Commending Jesus Christ; making a Glorious display of the Banner of free Grace, holding forth the Riches of it very clearly and convincingly, and bringing the offers thereof very low, wonderfully low; So that in hearing some of those Sermons. Particularly that on Matih. 22. I was made to think, that the Rope or Cord of the Offer of Salvation was let down and hung so low to sinners, that those of the lowest stature amongst them all, though but as Pygmies, might have caught hold of it, who, through Grace, had any mind to do so: and so home, so vehemently and urgently pressed, on so sweet and easie terms to be embraced, that I have been sometimes made to wonder how the hearers could refuse or shift them: But there is no saving Belief of this report made by Prophets, Apostles, Yea or by Blessed Jesus himself in his own Personall Ministrie, but where the arm of the Lord is Revealed, No man can or will ( invite, beseech and Perswade who will, if it were not only men, but even Angels, ) come to the Son except the Father that sent him draw him; There is no moving here without a pull of Ommipotentie; none are nor can be willing to yeeld themselves to Christ, till the day of his

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Power

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Power Pass on their hearts; till then, they will sit the most pressing calls of the Gospel, but then they can sit no longer, they must, they will rise then, and run after him, they will then (as the word signifies) make a free will Offering of themselves to him, however inexorable and inflexible they had shewed themselves before, they will then make an absolute, entire, universall, unexceptioned and Irreversible Surrender and Resignation of themselves to him, to be at his dispose, to be guided and saved by him in his own way. I know, the Remembrance of those Communion Sabbaths, High Sabbaths, and other ordinary Sabbaths and week days, wherein you Sister, and other Serious seekers of God in Glasgow in particular, heard the joyfull sound, walked in the light of Gods Countenance, and Rejoiced in his Name all the day, Living in a Holy croud of Precious Gospel Ordinances, and having, as it were, the Heavenly Manna of the Gospel falling abundantly about your Camp every day, making you think and say, that it was good to be there, is this day sweet and Savoury to you, and helps you in a good measure, to keep up a suitable and due esteem of fellowship and Communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, which is commended and endeared to your Souls and to the Souls of others of the Lords People, by the choice, rare, excellent and non-such Nature and Properties of it, It being found by you all, Priviledged with admission to the enjoyment thereof, in your experience to be: First, most Real and no Chimerical fancy, or a thing that hath no being but in the deluded imagination of the Person; and truly (saith the Apostle John. I Jon. 1. 3. Our Fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ: It hath most reall effects, though Spiritual: Gracious Souls being more lively affected with them, then their very external Senses are by the rarest and most Remarkable



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*Remarkable Objects: And no doubt, the more Spiritual anything is, It hath in it the greater reality, and worketh the more Powerfully and efficaciously: It is uncontrollable and quite removed from all reach of rational debate, that God is the greatest reality, and by Proportion Communion with God, Whereby nearest and closest Approaches are made to him, must be very real: marvellous are the effects of this Communion, and that your Souls know right well, as the Psalmist speaketh Psal. 139 14. in another case. Secondly, It is an Awfull Fellowship and full of dread, It impresseth the Soul with a deep, yet kindly reneration of the Glorious Majesty of the great and Holy God, Who (as it is said, Psal. 89. vers. 7.) Is greatly to be feared in the assemblies of his Saints (where they are admitted to fellowship with him) and to be had in reverence by all that are about him; When Jacob was admitted to very near Communion with him, Gen. 28. He saith, vers. 16. Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware: and vers. 17. It is said of him, that he was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this Place, this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven: Familiarity here breeds no contempt, nor is it waited with any neglect or forgetfulness to keep due distance. Thirdly, It is a deeply humbling and Holily Self-debasing Fellowship, as appears in Abraham, Gen. 18. who being, as Gods speciall friend, admitted to talk with him at an unusuall and extraordinary rate of Familiaritie, Yet interlines, (as it were) his discourse, almost in every period of it, with deeply self debasing acknowledgements of his being but dust and ashes, and deprecatings of Gods anger for his taking upon him to speak to Him, betwixt whom and himself there was so infinitely vast a disproportion: so the Prophet Isaiah, when he hath that Glorious Vision of the*

\* 4

Majestie

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*Majesty of God*, Chap. 6. and hears the Seraphims, those purely intellectuall Creatures, having their faces covered with their wings, as not being able to behold the *Brightness of the Glory* of the most absolutely perfect Holiness of God, crying, in a transport of admiration, each to another. Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Hosts, the Earth is full of his Glory, he saith, Wo's me for I am undone, Because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a People of Polluted lips, for mine eyes have seen the King the Lord of Hosts: So also Job, none such in his time, according to *Divine testimony*, when he is admitted to unusual nearness to God, saith Chap. 42. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhorre my self and repent in dust and ashes: The nearest approaches to that light wherein there is no darkness at all, make the clearest discoveries of the most eminent Saints their unworthiness, nothingness, and vileness. Fourthly, It is a Transforming Fellowship, and assimilates the Person Priviledged with admission to it, to Him that is conversed with, and with whom Fellowship is attained unto: there is no real Communion with him, but the result of it is some lineament of further likeness to him; We all (saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 3. 18.) Beholding the Glory of the Lord as in a Glass, are changed (or transformed) into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord: Communion with and conformity to God have mutual influence and Reciprocall force each upon other: the more Communion with him, the more likeness and conformity to him, the more likeness to him, the more Communion with him: little Communion with him makes little conformity to him, and little conformity to him cannot but be attended with little Communion with him. Fifthly, It is a wonderful Fellowship,



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*Fellowship, a fellowship that even sometimes transports, in a manner, the Soul admitted to it, especially in any more then Ordinary way or measure, into a sort of Rapture and extasy of Admiration at it: Thus it did David, 2 Sa. 7. 18. Who (saith he) am I, O Lord, and what is my Fathers house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? and Solomon, who being very near to God, in that Solemn prayer of his at the Dedication of the Temple, saith, 1 Kings 8. 27. But will God indeed dwell with men on earth? and as it is, 2 Chron. 6. vers. 18. But will God in very deed dwell with men on Earth? And indeed it is no great wonder that it be greatly wondered at, that the Infinitely great and Holy God who inhabiteth Eternity, and the High and Lofly one who dwelleth in the High and Holy Place, and is surrounded and attended there, with an Innumerable Company of Angels, & of the Spirits & of Just men made Perfect, all of them shining in light and burning in zeal, none of them wearying to do him service, should humble himself so far and stoop so low, so very low, as to dwell also (an Emphatick also) with sinful, though humble and contrit Creatures, who dwell in Cottages of clay and whose habitation is in the dust, that he who is of purer eyes then that he can behold iniquity without detestation and abhorrency, should yet humble himself not only to Behold, but with delight to dwell and keep fellowship with them, who are in a great measure unholy, and have so much of that dwelling in them, which his Soul hates; that the Glorious Persons of the dreadful and adorable God-head should come and make their abode with such, in whom so great a Remainder of stinking unmortified Corruption hath still its abode; that infinitely pure and perfect light should have fellowship with them in whom there is so much darkness. Sixthly, It is an estranging fellowship from all Idols, and what*

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ever is displeasing to God and estranging from him ; Accordingly Ephraim being brought near to him , saith ( Hol. 14. v. 8. ) what have I to do any more with Idols ? and the people of God supposed to be in a good Spiritual frame and near to him , say , Isai 30 22. to every Idol (which they cast away as a menstruous Cloth) with Indignation and abhorrency , get thee hence : and David being admitted to very near Communion with God , Psal. 6. saith v. 8. To wicked men by whose company he might have been estranged from him , depart from me , all ye workers of iniquity , for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping , the Lord hath heard the voice of my Supplication : And indeed it is Highly suitable and congruous , that it should be so , for what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols ? and Believers are the Temple of the living God , as the Apostle affirms 2 Cor. 6. 16. Seventhly , It is a heart quickening and reviving Fellowship ; Therefore he is said , Isai. 57. vers. 15. To dwell with him that is humble and of a contrite Spirit , to revive the Spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite one. Eighthly , It is a heart-staying , Calming and composing fellowship , it husheth into silence and drives away disquieting , Perplexing and excruciating fears ; And therefore saith the Psalmist when near to God , Psal. 3. 56. I laid me down and slept , I awaked , for the Lord sustained me , I will not be afraid of ten thousands of People that have set themselves against me round about : and Psal. 4. 8. I will both lay me down in Peace , and sleep , for thou Lord only makest me dwell in safety : So Psal. 27. 13, 14. Ninthly , It is a heart-cheering , refreshing , and Rejoicing fellowship , the refreshing and joy that result from fellowship with God , do quite surpass and transcend the joy that the men of the world have in the enjoyment of all their earthly pleasures ;



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*Pleasures ; Lift thou up (saith the Psalmist in the name of the Godly, Psal. 4. 7. In contradistinction from and opposition to those many who cry, who will shew us any good? debasing, and in a manner, brutifying themselves, as if they had not rational and Immortal Souls capable of enjoying God the chief good, the only Object suited Compleatly to satisfy their most enlarged desires) Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us, for thou hast caused more joy of heart to me, (to wit, thereby) Then when their Corn and Wine abound: And Psal. 89. 16. those who walk in the light of His Countenance are said to Rejoice in his name all the day: Thus, when he Prays, Psal. 43. For admission to fellowship with God in his publick ordinances (to which he had gone with others of his people, with the voice of joy and gladness, as they that kept Holy days, as he telleth us in the Preceeding Psalm) he promiseth in that case, that he will go unto the altar of God, unto God his exceeding joy, the gladness or joy of his joy, the very heart and Soul of his joy, or the Cream of it, as some translations render the word; there is reality, Solidity, strength and Efficacy, in that joy; it is heart-joy, while as in the very midst of the carnal joy, jollity and mirth of natural men arising from the greatest affluence of worldly pleasures and enjoyments, their heart is sorrowfull, as Solomon saith: there is no solidity in it, it hath not a bottom: if they would but a little retire within themselves and ask for a reason of their laughter, mirth, and jollity, it would instantly vanish, and their hearts would die within them as stones; it's kept up to their delusion and ruine, by their abstracting from, and non-reflecting upon the unsolidity and irrelevancy of the Grounds thereof: but the more the grounds of this joy of the Godly be reflected on, considered and searched into, they are found to be the more*  
all

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able to bear the Highest Superstructures of their joy. Truly, It is such a fellowship, that whatever measure of it be attained by sojourning Saints, It wakeneth desires, sharpeneth appetite, and stirreth up kindly longings for more, and yet more of it, even till it be compleated: Thus Moses the man of God, and his great favourite, whom he knew face to face, when admitted to very much familiar fellowship with him, and is told, that he had found Grace in his sight, that he knew him by name, And that at his earnest desire his presence should go with him, Exod. 33. 12, 13, 14. Yet saith he to the Lord, ve. s. 18. I beseech thee shew me thy Glory: So Holy Job Gods darling, whose candle shined on his head, by whose light he walked through darkness, and in whose Tabernacle the Secret of God was, Yet with much Holy longing, cries, Chap. 23. 3. Oh that I knew where I might find him, I would come even to his seat; and comforts himself amidst all his Sorrows with the assured hope of the fully Satisfieing sight and enjoyment of his Redeemer at the latter day: So likewise the Spouse in the Song, who had often been brought into the Banqueting house, having the Banner of her beloveds love spread over her, whose left hand had lain often under her head, and whose right hand had embraced her; who had often sitten down under his shadow with great delight, and found his fruits sweet to her taste: whose Spikenard did send forth the smell thereof, while the King sat at his Table: who had frequently found by the kisses of his mouth, his love to be better then Wine, and to whom he had often given his love: in the Vineyards: Yet cries in the conclusion of that High Song, make haste (or flee) my Beloved, and be thou like to a Roe or to a young Hart on the mountains of Spices: So was it also with David the man according to Gods heart, who had much  
sweet



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Sweet Communion with him in his wandrings and wilderness condition, in Caves and Dens of the Earth, and had often seen his Power and his Glory in the Sanctuary: Yet pants and breaths after more fellowship with him, even as the chased Hart doth after the water brooks, and cries, when shall I come and appear before God? Psal. 42. So in like manner, was it with the Apostle Paul Christs great Minion, who beside all the good dayes he had in dispensing Gospel Ordinances, in planting and watering Churches, in converting and edifying multitudes of Souls, in his triumphing, by making manifest the savour of Christs knowledge, had been ravished into the third Heavens, caught up into Paradise and heard there unspeakable words, that were not lawful or possible to be uttered: Yet as if he had never been with him, desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ as best of all, and groans within himself, longing to be absent from the Body and present with the Lord: And thus was it, finally, with John the Divine, the Beloved Disciple, who had often lyen in his sweet Masters bosom, and could confidently say, Truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, closeth his Revelations with that Holy Passionate desire, Even so come Lord Jesus.

Dear Friends, let it be more then ever your great work, and business, to keep your selves in case and capacity to enjoy his blessed company and Fellowship: And in order to this end. 1. Study to keep your selves through Grace as chaste virgins to Christ Jesus, as your one Husband, let him be to you as the loving Hart and Pleasant Roe, let his embraces satisfie you at all times, and be ye always ravished with his love, and beware of embracing the bosom of a stranger, let him be to you as a bundle of Myrrhe lying all night betwixt your breasts, be for him and not for another, so shall he be for and with you, resting in his  
love

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love and rejoycing over you with singing. 2. Touch no unclean thing, hate the very garment spotted with the flesh, abstain tenderly from all appearance of evil: O defile not those Temples of the living God, of the Holy Ghost, which Temples ye are: let no unclean thing be harboured or tolerated there, nothing that may provoke him to leave or loath his dwelling and Temple, nothing that may make his abode in them grievous, unpleasant, lothsome, or wearisome to him. 3. Let all his Ordinances, and duties of his worship be high in your esteem, and much commended and even endeared to your hearts, as means of Communion and fellowship with him: O be much in love with the habitation of his house and the place where his Honour dwels; let his Tabernacles be very Amiable to you: these are his haunt, and let them be yours. 4. Beware of all sinfull dalliances with Idols, whereby the Soul is estranged from Communion with God, for there is no agreement betwixt the Temple of God and Idols: from love to fellowship with him and from zeal to his Glory, bid them all, with indignation, be gone, saying to them, what have we any more to do with Idols? and as to a menstruous cloth, get you hence. 5. When He hides his face, withdraws his presence, and suspends you from fellowship with him, be troubled, arise, shake off laziness, sloth and security, be Holily restless, and go the round (as it were) of all Commanded duties, till you find him, seek him diligently in the night watches on your bed, go forth to the streets and broad places, go to the watch men, and seek him whom your Souls love: you will have gone but a little and you shall find him, and when you have found him, hold him and let him not go, do not awake nor raise him, till he please. 6. Study to be very humble, tender and contrite of heart, to be poor in Spirit, constantly sensible of your Spiritual poverty, emptiness, wants and indigencies,



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indigencies ; and to tremble at his word ; at commands, lest they be not suitably obeyed ; at threatnings, lest they be executed, at promises, lest you seem to come short of them ; for it is in persons thus qualified that he delights to dwell, and it is to such that he loves to look, as is very clear, *Isai 57 15. and 66. 2. 7.* Love, prize, improve, and, as ye have access, study to keep up (as you Sister in Particular are helped through Grace to do beyond many) the Communion of Saints, those excellent ones of the earth, in whom, next to his own blessed self, all your delight should be : in Communion with those Saints, Communion with the King of Saints is readily attained, it being there that he Commands the Blessing, even life for evermore. 8. Be much in the lively exercise of Faith in, and of love to the Lord Jesus ; and be Spiritually precise, strict, exact, accurate and punctual in obedience to all his Commands, from Principles of Faith and love ; and Christ and his Father will love you and come and make their abode with you, as he promiseth, *John 14. 21, 23.* O ! desirable Guests and worthie of all possible welcome, of all ready and cheerfull entertainment : follow hard after him, constantly and closely pursue conformity to him, and Communion with him : It is but a litle, and the conformity to him shall be compleated, and you likened Perfectly to him, according to creature capacity ; and the Communion with him which is now but in Part, (as all the spirituall priviledges and enjoyments of the People of God, while upon earth, are) shall be fully perfected, shall be Immediate without the intervention of the Comparatively dark Glass of Ordinances ; even to seeing him face to face, and as he is ; and shall be eternally uninterrupted without the least cloud or moments Eclipse ; now it is a Cloud & a clear day, a sun-blink and anone a shower, *rara hora, brevis mora, a rare hour, but quickly gone ; It shal not be so then.*

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*then. O desirable and delightful day ! O sweet, singularly  
sweet and solacious day ! O Rare and Ravishing day ! let  
all other dayes pass and hasten away, and let that Glorious  
day come ; Even so come Lord Jesus and tarry not.  
I am*

**Beloved Christian Friends,  
and dear Sister,**

**Your very affectionat Friend  
and Seriously well-wishing  
Servant in the Gospel.**

**J. C.**

*I heartily wish that this mite of  
service may be acceptable to the  
Saints, it being not improbable,  
that it may be the last service of  
this kind; that I shall have ac-  
cess to do them.*

**Feb. 4. 1685.**

**A Prepara-**





# A Preparation-Sermon, FOR THE COMMUNION.

**I Cor. II. 29.** *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning the Lords Body.*



**I** hath been so ordered in the good Providence of God, that ye have lately heard of that main, very comprehensive and indispensibly necessary duty, called for from all that would worthily partake of the ordinance of the Lords Supper. for which we are now making ready, *viz. Self Examination*; In reference to which the Apostle having perceived many faults, and failings in these *Corinthians*, and much unsuitableness as to their communicating; gives advertisement that whoever for the time to come would aright approach to the Table of the Lord, *would examine themselves, and so eat*: and knowing well that this is a difficult exercise, and that there is naturally a great deal of averseness in peoples hearts from it; he Judgeth it meet to Press the exhortation to that necessary, though difficult duty, by a reason

a reason or Motive set down in the words now read in your hearing. *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself*; As if he had said, you had need to look well to the examination of your selves, for if ye neglect or miscarry in that duty, your hazard and danger is dreadfully great through unworthy communicating; which if ye would escape, then make conscience narrowly and carefully to examine your selves: The last words of the verse are a confirmation of the reason, and do shew why the Lord is so holily severe in punishing and Plaguing those who approach to this Table unworthily through not examining of themselves? because *They discern not the Lords Body*; The force whereof is, that there is a most singular and gracious presence of the Lord Christ in the Sacrament of his Supper, and therefore the person who goes not aright about it; doth put a great disrespect upon, yea doth even vilifie him who is thus present in that ordinance.

It is the first Part of these Words, that at this time we would mainly speak to; wherein we would explicate the meaning of these three. 1. To eat and drink unworthily, here, is to eat and drink unsuitably or unbecomingly; as the Apostle when he willet the Christian *Romans Chap. 16.* 2. To receive *Phebe as becometh* and is suitable to *Saints*, he makes use of the word *worthily*, for so it is in the Original; and this being the opposite to that, is to be understood, unsuitably and unbecomingly, to such a manifestation of the love of Christ, in giving himself to, and for his people: as in our common language, when a man does a thing unsuitably, we say he did it unworthily, when it answers not the end proposed. 2. Judgment or Damnation here, takes in these three things. 1. A Temporal stroke: as



v. 30 31. For this cause many among you are sickly and weak, and many sleep. 2 It may look to eternal Judgement; as Damnation is often taken in Scripture. 3. It may look to Spiritual Judgements; for though a Believer be not capable of eternal Judgement: yet by unworthy Communicating he may draw upon himself temporal strokes and spiritual Judgements; he may much wear out the life of Grace, and bring himself under blasting and withering; and unbelievers draw upon themselves not only those, but eternal damnation, and that with a higher degree of aggravation. 3. That he is said to *Eat and Drink* this to himself, as in the former verse a man is Commanded to *Examine himself*; It may take in these two, as aimed at by the Apostle, 1. It is to provoke every man to his particular duty, from his particular hazard, He hazards his own soul, 2. It is put here to shew the restriction of the Judgement according to the Sin; and so, if a man examine himself; though others neglect it, the Judgement shall not overtake him; but if he examine not himself, who ever escape Judgement, he shall not escape it; and thus its an encouragement to a man to go about the duty of Self-examination, as well as a motive of terror; *Corinth* being corrupted with many abuses, one Person could not amend all: well (sayes he) *Let a man examine himself*, and so he shall escape the hazard, if not, he will fall under it.

We shall *First* draw some observations from the words, and then speak a word for Use.

*First* it is supposed here, that in this ordinance of the Lords Supper there is a special eminencie, excellencie dignitie and worth; or, this Ordinance of the Lords Supper, is of a singular Solemn nature: and this I gather partly from this verse considered in it self; *He*  
that

that *Eats and Drinks unworthily*, implies that there is a special worthiness in it, that a man should not offer indignity to; and partly from the connexion of this *verse* with the former, for it is made a reason why he presses particular and strict Self-examination, which shews that there is a more singular excellencie in this ordinance then in others: and partly from the context, for every Circumstance speaks out a Solemnity in this Ordinance, as 1. The night when it was instituted, *vers. 23* The same night in which he was betrayed, and when he was taking his goodnight of his Disciples, 2. His jealousy of, and his quarrelling and threatening for the abuse of this Ordinance, Speaks out a special excellencie in the Ordinance; that all who approach thereunto should be suitably affected with: all the ordinances of the Lord are excellent: for if all his works be excellent, Then much more the Gospel-ordinances, as being a step above those: and yet this ordinance of the Lords Supper seems dignified with an eminencie and excellencie above them all. 1. In reference to what it sets out and exhibits: They all set out love, but this sets out love in an eminent degree: for it sets forth the Lords Death, wherein the most eminent step and degree of his Love shines, Yea this Ordinance sets out his actual dieing, and so sets out his Love in its Liveliest Colours, and as the great Master-piece of it. 2. In respect of the excellent Benefits communicated in it; It is true, there is no other thing on the matter communicat in it, then there is Communicat in the word and Baptisme, Yet if we look to the words, *Take ye, eat ye, this is my Body*, They hold out Christ Jesus not so much giving any Particular gift, as actually conferring himself in his Death and Suffering; And the main scope being to conferr Christ and all that is in him to the Believer, It holds out some way the



the excellencie of this ordinance beyond others. 3. In respect of the manner how our Lord Jesus makes over himself; whereby I mean not only the clearness of his making over himself for in this ordinance there is the clearest view of a slain Saviour, and of Covenanting with God; and often the most comfortable manifestations of Love go alongst with it, for which cause its called eminently *the Communion*; But also that there is here a clear glance of Heaven upon earth, Jesus Christ and his People mixing (to speak so) and being familiar together; he condescending not only to keep company with them, but to be their food and refreshment and he giving them not only the word to their faith, but himself (as it were) to their sense: in so far as the mean whereby He communiceth himself is more sensible: It is by his Spirit that the mean is made effectual: and there is not only a fixedness of Faith on our Part but a sort of Divineness in the ordinance it self: the very First fruits of Heaven being communicat, as it were, to the very senses of the Believer: *I say unto you, (sayes the Lord, Matth. 26 29.) I will not Drink henceforth of the Fruit of the Vine, until that day, I Drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdome*; where he seems to point out a more speciall way of keeping communion with his people in this Ordinance, in resemblance to that which he will have with them in heaven: There being here a more speciall union and communion betwixt the head and members sealed up, a type of that which is to be in Heaven. A taste whereof is sometimes given in this ordinance of the Communion: hence, its not only called the *Communion*, as in the foregoing Chapter, but the *communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*; and the *Table of the Lord*.

The first Use of it serves to let us see how much we are

are obliged to Christ Jesus, what could he have given more then himself? And what mean could have been invented, that could have more confirmed and warmed the hearts of his people then this, which is so lively a representation and Commemoration of his Blessed Body? very like we might come to discern His body better, if there were a more high estimation of this ordinance: not as if there were any efficacy in it of itself to communicate Grace: Yet in respect of Christs institution, its a most lively mean of Grace, and there is not a circumstance in all the action, but its to be wondered at: as that it was instituted the same night he was betrayed: and after the Paschall Supper when the Traitor Judas was going to bring the band of Souldiers to take him: That he warrands us to take it, and that we have therein sweet Communion amongst our selves: every thing in it ought to draw us to admire his sufferings, and the great love they came from, and the notable affects thereof on us.

The second Use, serves to Provoke us to studie to be in a Solemn Divine Heavenly frame, for such a Solemn Divine Heavenly action as this is: and thorowly to examine our selves, and to see that all things be in good order: like to a bride that is to be Married to morrow, who will be trying on her marriage cloathes, and seeing that all things be right. I shal not descend to particulars, but in *Three or Four words* in the general, only point at such a frame as we conceive is called for from you. 1. It should be such a frame as ye would desire to be in, if Christ were coming personally and visibly to Marrie you to morrow: and O! That this night might thus be a Brydel or Marriage evening to us all: Consider what frame we would wish to be in, if we were to meet with him, and strike hands with him personally



personally and visibly, Studie and seek after such a frame. 2. It should be such a frame as we would desire to have if we were going to give up the Ghost, when all earthly things will be insignificant and of little worth to us: even such a Frame as if our eternal Peace and happiness were depending on that chock, This would be the night of making our Testament (as it were) and of the adjusting our accounts with God and of putting things to a Point betwixt him and us; other wayes our debt may increase and grow greater, and it will not be so easie for us to win to a discharge of it. 3. It should be such a frame as we would desire to be found in, if the day of Judgement were coming, and if that day were to be so morrow: O! how humble, how abstracted from the things of a present world, and how confirmed in the Faith of Gods love, would we study to be, If the voice of the Arch angel, and of the last Trumpet were sounding, and a Solemn meeting of all before the Tribunal of Christ were presently to be? what a frame (I say) would ye desire to be in in such a case? Even such a frame should ye study to be in this night as ye would desire to be found in, In that day: We fear it will be to many then a Prick and a sting in their Consciences within them, That they made so little Conscience to be in a suitable frame for this so Solemn an Ordinance; The Text tells that a sentence will pass on every one of you, and you would by all means labour to be in such a Posture as the sentence may not be terrible to you. 4. It should be a Heavenly and Divine frame, for if it be a Heavenly and Divine action, ye would consider what a frame it calleth for; how abstracted (as I just now said) the Heart should be from the World, and from your carnall delights. How much in Heaven and conversant with God, what a pitch  
your

your communion with God should be raised to, in apprehending of, and meditating on him, in considering of, and admiring at the Sufferings of Christ and at the love they came from: tasting that he is good, and even delighting and solacing your selves in his love, which is the Lords allowance on his People, when the action is humbly and reverently gone about.

2. *Observe*, that though this be a most singularly Solemn Ordinance and Solemnly to be gone about, yet oftentimes men and women go most unworthily about it and abuse it: This is implied in the words, and we need not many proofs of it: If we will read from the 20. vers. to this, we will find it sufficiently proved: and if we look forward to vers. 30. and 31. We will find that many sad strokes came on these *Corinthians* for abusing and profaning this Ordinance, and the Apostle would have them gathering their unworthy communicating from these strokes: There is a readiness both in unbelievers and in believers themselves to miscarry in going about this ordinance: a readiness in unbelievers, for as they Spoile all things, all ordinances and duties they meddle with, *all things being unclean to the unbeliever*, So there is a miserable and woful necessity lying upon them to spoil this Ordinance: and a readiness even in Believers, who also may miscarry therein, as is implied in the last words of the Chapter compared with vers. 32. *When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the World*: Some of them that were believers were chastised for this fault to prevent their eternal ruine: and are there any acquainted with their own corrupt nature, but they may and will in some measure find in themselves an aptitude to miscarry, as in all other duties and ordinances so in this: But the Doctrine holds out a singular and peculiar



peculiar bentness to miscarry in this duty and Ordinance, So that one who will pray with advertencie and be carried fairly thorough in that and several other duties, may yet in this Ordinance fall under the guilt of unworthy Communicating: The reasons of it may be these. 1. Because the more Solemn the duty be, and the greater concurrence of duties be in it, there is the greater difficulty in going about it, for a Soul cannot be right in this, except it be right in a number of other duties and Graces, as in Prayer, Faith, Love, and Repentance; and that word: *Let a man examine himself*, takes in a complication of Duties and Graces: there would be a good state and a good frame, and Graces would be in some vigour, and every Duty suitable and Proportionable to the Nature of the action and of the day: and if it be a great and difficult work to carry rightly on an ordinary Sabbath, or in Prayer, or meditation, or other duties any day, what a difficult work must it needs be to have all these rightly yoked together? A Second reason may be drawn not only from the complication of Graces and Duties, that is required in this action; But from the Nature of the thing it self, that calls for Duties in a high Degree of Spirituality; if any Ordinance or Duty call for a Spiritual frame it is this, It requires that the exercise of the Judgement be most clear, that Faith be most distinct, that Meditation be most Divine &c. And the more Spiritual the Duty be, there is certainly the more aptness in us thorough our corruption to miscarry in it. A Third reason is, Because there is in Men and Women naturally, and ordinarily but very little study, and endeavour to know and take up aright the nature of this ordinance; There is in the most part a great ignorance of the Strain and Series of the Gospel; but generally there is a greater Ignorance,

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Darkness

Darkness and Blindness as to the right partaking of this Ordinance, then as to most others; either thorow the difficultry of it, or through our Laziness that puts us not to study it better: So that if it were asked at many of us who may have some affection, what is a Communion? And what is the right way of partaking of it? there would be found but very little distinctness in the thing, and many content themselves to live without cleareness about it: And this makes people incapable to go about it aright. A Fourth reason is from Peoples loathness to bestir themselves in the wo k of Preparation for it; There is some Self examination requisite for every Duty, but there is a more Solemn Self examination injoynd in reference to this; and how very reluctant are we to it? And seeing examination of our selves is as the door, and entry to this Duty, is it any wonder that most Persons Communicate unworthily? This exercise of Self-searching, being so much slighted, which is to the most part so very difficult, and to many through their own fault impossible.

The *First* use Serves for warning as to this matter; It is easie to get a Token and to come to the Table, but it is not so easie *To Eat and Drink worthily*, not so easie, to discern the Lords Body and to get Christ himself in the ordinance: and in a word so to go about partaking of the Lords Supper, as ye may have solid quietness of mind in reflecting on it: Is it not a wonder then that the most part doe so securely and in a manner even desperately rush upon it, who have it may be lyen, some Ten, some Twenty, some thirty years without trouble under this guilt? We would think it a good piece of Preparation, if ye were Seriously afraid to become guilty of the *Body and Blood of the Lord*: want of this holy fear breeds security and keeps from stirring up to durie, and from reflecting on our selves: whereas if the heart



were stirred and roused with such a fear, there would be greater and more seriously sharpened diligence in all these duties, whereof we heard from the foregoing words, to which this is a strong and pressing motive.

The Second Use Serves for Tryal, who among the great company gathered together here this day are afraid of sinning against God and taking his Name in vain in so Solemn an Ordinance; many think they are prepared: but we think not that person the better prepared that is not afraid and holily jealous over himself: Wo wo to many on the account of Communion-daves that are past and gone without fear: It were good that ye were afraid lest this day prove to be like many former daves, and lest any of you come short of what hath been attained in former communion daves.

Thirdly: *Observe* That the sin of unworthy Communicating is a Wrath provoking and a Judgement-drawing-on-sin: *He that Eates and Drinks unworthily, Eates and Drinks Damnation to himself*: There is hardly any sin that the Lord will more readily, speedily, and Sadly Plague and punish, then this: Its true the Lord hath annexed his Certification to the third Command, That He will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his Name in vain: but is there any Ordinance wherein the Threatning is more expressed, and in reference to which the Judgement hath been more severely & some way indifferently inflicted? As is clear whether we read before or after the words of the Text: And there is good reason for it. For first, If the duty be more Solemn, if the presence in it be more gracious, and the bounty that flows in it be more abundant, then sure the sin of abusing, or of unbecoming going about it, must be the greater. Secondly if we look to the sin not only in respect of its greatness in several other respects, but in respect

respect of the Nature of it, Its a more direct disrespect put upon and despiht done in some respect even unto Christ. Its to be guilty of the *Body and Blood of the Lord*: It as if the Spear had been in such a mans hand that pierced Christs side, and as if he had driven by his own hand the Nails thorow His Hands and Feet: The reason is because Christ in this Ordinance brings himself and his death so very near, that the sinner is put to it in a speciall manner either to receive him, or to refuse and reject him; and when he refuses and rejects him, he thereby Practically sayes, that he makes but very little or no account of him at all, and that if he had been living in those dayes when He was crucified, he would also have joined with the Multitude and cryed, *away with him*; Thus such an one *Crucifieth the son of God afresh and puts him to an open shame*, O baineous and horrid guilt!

The First Use Serves to allarme you; that if the fear of sin will not prevail with you, the fear of Judgement, of Gods curse and wrath, and of the vengeance of the Mediator (represented in this Ordinance very clearly, as crucified and bleeding out his precious life for sinners) Here and eternally hereafter, may prevail with you to be serious in the work ye are now called to.

Let me ( which is a Second and more particular Use of the Doctrine, ) advise you, as to examine your selves seriously, in reference to all your other wayes, so to take a Speciall look of your bygone Communicating; O! that many of you who are so whole at the Heart, that there is no provoking nor wakening of you, and who are so senseless that ye feare at nothing, could be prevailed with to charge your selves with this horrid sin of being guilty of the *Body and Blood of the Lord*, That thereby ye may be awakened; It will certainly  
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one day awake you : therefore in your Self examination , take speciall notice if ye have not Communicated unworthily : make Speciall addresses to God for removing of this dreadful Guilt : and have a special eye for the time to come that ye fall not in it : : I say again , take a speciall review of your bygone carriage in this Ordinance , and say to your selves , whether are we Guilty of this sin ? and whether are we in Hazard to fall into it of new ? And to stirre you up to this , Consider . I. What temporal strokes from God have come or may come for it : who knowes but our outward captivity , the Blood that hath been shed , the many new and unheard of or but very little heard of diseases that are among us , have in a great Part been for this Sin ? Secondly know : that beside temporal Strokes on the outward man , ye may fall under Spiritual Plagues : the Lord may blast the Ordinances for the time to come , that they shal do you no good : and He may . last any part and gift that ye have : He may make your Ears dull of hearing and your Eyes blind , and your Hearts fat ; And if ye quench any convictions that ye may possibly be under for the time , it may be that ye shal never be priviledged with such convictions again , nor be brought so near Heaven hereafter : but more delusion and seduction by Error , more Prophanity , Security , Hypocisie , and Presumption may break in among you ; And though these be not thought much of now by some at least , but lookt at as very light things , yet the day will come when they will be found to be inapporably Heavy : And men will be put rather to wish , that this house , wherein we now are , had fallen on them and bruised them , or that the Sword had fallen in upon them and slain them , then to ly under such a weight . Thirdly , know that it may bring on eternal judgement ; And O ! but this will draw

deep on the Score of many Professors ; even the abuse  
 of the Lords Table, in partaking of His Table , and of  
 the Table of devils : I shall Name but a few Sins here  
 that ye would notice and try your selves in as to this :  
*First* Ye have often Communicat , have ye also often  
 Examined your selves ? can many of you Pitch on such  
 an hour or half hour, that ye set a part to try your Souls  
 condition ! *Secondly* I would ask what Repen<sup>ance</sup> hath  
 there been , Right examination makes discovery of  
 Guilt : and discovery of Guilt brings out Repentance,  
 which hath some pricking and Soul panging with it ;  
*Thirdly*. What effect hath followed ? What engage-  
 ments have been kept ? How have many of us re-  
 formed our walk ? Is not our carriage as it was ? Pas-  
 sion and Pride, as quick and lively as they had wont to  
 be, Deadness, Security, and worldly mindedness as they  
 were before ? Are we not as little Self denyed ? As un-  
 ready to Fo give, As Ignorant and having as little know-  
 ledge of Gospel mysteries as we were , and had many a  
 Year Since ? But very few can say on good grounds  
 that they have made any Progresse in Mortification and  
 Holiness ; and except it be some conviction, Some flash  
 of affection, Or some faint Resolution to amend things  
 amisse , What use hath been made of , or what benefit  
 hath been reaped by many and that not of the worst  
 sort, by the Communion ? and therefore in the next  
 place let me say that it were not unbecoming or unsuit-  
 able to the Communion , to make this night a night of  
 Humiliation before God and of prayer to him to be  
 delivered from *Blood Guiltiness* ; There is not a more  
 legible Evidence of our untenderness , then our being  
 little pricked at the heart for this sin ; a word of reflecti-  
 on from our Neighbour , or the apprehension of some  
 great Mans displeasure and Feud , hath lyen nearer our  
 hearts,



hearts, then the wronging of the Son of God at this rate, hath done, for which it were good now to cast an eye *To look to him, and to mourn as on mourneth for his only Son, and to go to Zion weeping as we go, asking the way thitherward.* These are no uncouth nor strange things, but such as are Ordinarily prest upon us; We are afraid that many have loathed and left the simple way of Godliness; to get and look after some Shining and Glistering thing to the Eye, and that way will never profit them; to take a serious look of your Souls condition, and to be in good earnest in the exercise of Repentance, as the life of your Preparation; even that ye may come knowing well what ye need, and what ye are to Receive if ye come aright.

The *Third* and main Use is, that seeing there is so great ground to fear Communicating unworthily, and that so great Judgements follow upon it, it would be, as our fear to Communicat unworthily; So our uptaking business, how we may communicat worthily; This is the end of the day, and should be our task, and work this night, even to endeavour to be worthy communicants to-morrow: Ye will readily ask how is such a Frame to be attained and come by? I would, for answer, desire you seriously to mind what ye have heard on these words, *Let a man Examine himself and so let him eat,* Which comprehend the Summe of what is called for from you; and we shal now add these *Four* things, that in your preparing your selves to Communicat Rightly and worthily, ye would seriously mind, 1. A right uptaking of your selves. *Secondly*, A Right uptaking of the Ordinance. *Thirdly*, A right Acting in reference to both. *Fourthly*, A right manner of Acting, or a right Frame in your going about the work. For the *First*, We say, there would be a right uptaking of our Selves, that

we may know what we are, what are our Sins, Spiritual wants and necessities, that we may have some distinct errand to God; This is implied in these Words. *Let a man examine himself*; That he may be well acquainted with himself: if there be not some time taken for attaining to a right Consideration of our Selves, we cannot come rightly to this Ordinance: or if any word come that suits our condition it will come by guess as to us, and we may come to the Communion, and neither know what we need, nor what we are seeking or would be at.

For the *Second*: We say, there would be a right up-taking of the ordinance it self, which when wanting it murtheres us, that we know not how to Communicate: in the ordinance we would take up the substance of it, the end of it, and how it effectuates the end. *First*, The Substance of the ordinance is Christ Jesus himself, who though he be not bodily, yet is he really present in the Sacrament; His words are not empty words, the Signes are not empty Signes; But *the Bread is his Body, and the wine is his Blood*: For if there be a presence in the word, as he makes it known through his Spirit, by the efficacy of it on the Heart; then in a more speciall and Solemn manner, there is a presence in the Sacrament; which also he makes sensible, to the Spiritual senses of the Believer. *Secondly*, The end and use of the Ordinance, for which God hath appointed it, would also be rightly taken up; and this is large. It serves for the manifesting of his love in his Death till he come again; and this would be a piece of your exercise to discover the love of Christ in it, and to put your faith to exercise on that love: In which respect Christians have not only their Particular case to look to in the Sacraments. But also that their Spirits be taken up with the

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the thoughts of the wonderfully condeſcending love of Chriſt, who hath given and left behind him a token and Memoriall of it: and eſpecially theſe ends would be looked to and conſidered, *viz.* That its given for our inſtruction, for it gives us a Sight of Chriſt crucified; It ſhewes us the way of making up our union with him, and the neceſſity of it, and the waſh given us to make uſe of him: and as its given for inſtruction and teaching ſo for ſealing and confirming; the Lord would have us the obſerving the truth of his Promiſes and covenant for our greater conſolation, and that we may with greater liberty apply them: even as when a Prince offers peace to a Rebel and grants him a Pardon, to make him the more ſure, and to remove all doubts and jealousies there is a ſeal appended to the Pardon, which confirms it, and conſequently ſtrengtheneth the Faith of the Rebel to reſt upon it: So this is a ſpecial end of the Sacrament to Seal and confirme: God having graciously condeſcended to Covenant and Promise, and to Swear to the truth of his Covenant and promise. *That the Heirs of Promise may have ſtrong conſolation.* He alſo appends ſeals to his Covenant. But *Thirdly*, We are to conſider how it effectuates theſe ends: and thus we are to look on the Sacrament as exhibiting and applying Jeſus Chriſt and his Benefits: which muſt needs be a ſpiritual and Sublime thing. holden out in theſe words. *Take ye, eat ye, this is my Body, &c.* Where we have Jeſus Chriſt giving over himſelf to the Believer, ſo as he and the Believer become one, and he hath Chriſt to feed upon: Its true there is no Phyſicall conjunction here: Yet as in the word, the offer and promises convey Chriſt holden out in the Promiſes to the Soul, being received by faith, there is an union thus made up betwixt Chriſt and the Perſon: So in the right partaking of the Sacrament, the

Spirit going along with the word and Seal, and the believer receiving the Seal as given him of God for that end, as well as the word: There results an union and Communion, a mystical and Spiritual uniting and joyning of Christ and the believer together: Which although it doth not alwayes necessarily presuppose Faith going before, yet it supposes Faith necessarily to go along with it: and in this there is most expresse covenanting and bargaining betwixt Christ and the Believer, Jesus Christ not giving himself here indefinitely, as he doth in the word and offer of the Gospel, but particularly: and thus the Believers Faith hath the most distinct ground and reason to make application of him, and so the more distinct confirmation.

For the *Third*, there is a right acting in reference to both the former to be looked to, 1. There is something that our Judgement and memory would be taken up with, which is as the key to what follows: we are to remember the Lords Death, the end of it: the love he had in dying: and his instituting of this ordinance when he died for this end, that we might remember his death and love therein, till he come again; and have our minds meditating on these. *Secondly*, There would be the exercise of our Graces, as of repentance, from reflecting on our selves; of love from looking to Christ, and of continued spiritual mourning resulting from both; & especially there would be the exercise of Faith as being the main thing that on our part makes up the union, and whereby our Communion is entertained: and there is a *threefold* act of Faith called for in worthy Communicating, 1. An act receiving, 2. An act giving. 3. A ratifying act, that knits both the acts together. 1. I say an act of Faith receiving Christs word and ordinance, and himself therein. 2. An act of faith giving.



giving, resigning or committing our selves to him : the covenant being in this respect mutual. And *Thirdly*, a ratifying act coupling or knitting these together, viz. Christ giving himself to us and our giving our selves to him, his ingagement to us and ours to him : To clear these a little further, *First* the receiving act of faith looks to the institution and covenant to which the Sacrament is appended, and to Christ in the words of institution and in the Covenant, making offer of himself ; Which is to be considered as in the word and covenant, to which the Sacrament is appended, and accordingly it welcometh him, as it doth in the word ; for as there is a receiving act of Faith as to the Word, So there is a receiving act of Faith as to the Sacrament ; That is, when the Soul is put to dispute whether about the offer if it be made to it, or about the Promise that supposes the condition, if it may lay hold upon it ; The Believing souls taking of the Sacrament, is the permitting and allowing of it self to be confirmed by verue of Christs appointing that ordinance for its confirmation, that the offer is made to it, and that the Promise belongs to it in particular : as when a penitent sinner comes to the Communion, and that promise rolls in his thoughts, *Thy sins and thy iniquities will I remember no more*, and he would fain believe it ; the receiving act of Faith is to take the Sacrament as Gods putting his Seal to that word of promise that he will make it good to the soul in particular. *Thy sins and thy iniquities will I remember no more* : Or when a Soul hath its secret longing after Christ, and cannot dispense with the want of him, and cryes out, *O ! When wilt thou come unto me ?* In the Sacrament it looks on the institution and takes it as a Seal of confirmation to put it out of question, that he that hath promised to come, will come and will not tarry.

and it looks on Christ giving the Communion, as if it saw him taking the pen, and with his own hand Subscribing the contract, and lays it up in its heart as in a Charter Chest, as an evidence and confirmation of its right to Christ: and indeed there is much need of being distinct in this; for there are many who make conscience of engaging to Christ in this Ordinance, who look not on it as Christ engaging to them; but the receiving act of faith looks on it immediately as his engaging to the Soul: as a person that hath a hard heart, looking on that promise, *I will take away the stony heart, and give a heart of flesh*, and expecting the making out of it, takes the Sacrament as a Seal that he will performe that promise, because he articles so with him to get that promise made good; even as a man that would have some debatable clause in his right to such a piece of land cleared and put out of question, brings it to his Superior to get it Sealed or new: Now this receiving act of faith doth not only, dispose and fit us to receive from God; but as the hand takes or receives the elements, so faith receives Gods offer of the Covenant, and that which is represented and sealed up in that ordinance. Secondly The act of faith giving; is (as I said) that whereby we give our selves away to Christ; and so, as we get one right, we give (as it were) another; or as we take on board we gave another; we receive Christ engaged to us according to the Covenant, and we engage and give our selves away to be His: our very receiving supposes our consenting, and faiths delivering and giving up it self or the person to Christ, and taking Christ to it, or to himself, so making (as it were) an exchange. (O! wonderful exchange, by which we receive infinitely more and better then we give) when the Soul hath gotten him, it gives it self to him, to be changed and



and made better, and renews its purposes resolutions and promises to that end, and takes the Sacrament to make these sure and secure. *Thirdly* The ransoming act of Faith is this, when we have taken Christs Promise by Faith and have given our promise to him, and surrendered and delivered up our selves unto him; and we go about the communion and exercise our faith to get both confirmed; as we use to speak *We will take our Sacrament on it*; we take the Communion to seal his part of the Covenant to us, and to confirm our selves as to the performance of that which we have engaged to him; and thus that which was before a bond on Christs side, and a bond and engagement on our side, becomes now a mutuall contract and bargain; both are put in one and complicated together. Sealed with one seal, and made use of for both these ends: the believer thinks himself surer of Gods promise, and himself more securely engaged to God; and though this engaging hath no new Promise with it; yet thereby the more explicitly is our duty brought forth, and the promise more particularly becomes ours.

As for the *Fourth* and last thing, It is a right manner of acting, or a right way or suitable frame in our going about this ordinance, which takes in several things as. 1. Fear, because it is a very difficult thing rightly to Communicate and we had need to fear least we mistake and miscarry. 2. Distinctness and clearness, which is a part of the result of self examination; we would at least be so far clear in our condition as to know and be convinced that the generall strain of our way hath not been right as it should have been by very far when we cannot so well find our and confesse upon the particular evils, that we have been given to or have done; and though we know not all nor many of the particular

Premises

Promises of the Covenant, yet we would be clear in that general, that in the Covenant God maketh over himself a God all-sufficient to the believer. Thirdly faith in and dependance on God for preparation, and for a suitable frame; for gaining new ground of corruptions, for more humility and tenderness, for more thorough turning to the Lord; *Convert me* (sayes Ephraim, Jer. 31.) *And I shall be converted*, there would be many Serious and Sincere resolutions; engagements, and purposes, and much heart-melting, and Prayer in the making of them, as it was with Israel and Judah Jer. 50. 5. Whose great desire and designe was, to have the Covenant betwixt God and them so secured, that it might hold perpetually and never any more be forgotten, they desired to keep (as we use to speak) no hank in their own hand, they allow of no reservations or exceptions, and they go about this great work Praying and weeping: This were a Sweet and suitable frame for a Communion, and notably well becoming a people that Approach to the Lords Table; and we seriously commend it to you, and you to the grace of God in the Practise of these things, which his own blessed self make forthcoming to you.

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## A Preparation SERMON, for the Communion.

On I Cor. II. 29. *Not discerning the Lords Body.*

**I**T is a very great and grave, a very Momentous and concerning work, rightly to partake of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; it hath as many and great advantages, attending the due and worthy Participation there-

of,



of, and as many sad consequences following the unworthy Parricipation of it, as any other of all the ordinances of Christ hath; and therefore when the Apostle hath sharply expostulated with the Christian *Corinthians* for several abuses in reference to this Ordinance; he proceeds, after a full declaration of its institution, to guard them against all after abuse thereof, and to fit and prepare them for suitable and worthy communicating; And the *first* direction that he gives them is in reference to preceeding Preparation, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat*. The *Second* is, in reference to the action it self, teaching them to communicate worthily, So as they may discern the *Lords Body*, by holding out the danger of unworthy Communicating; both which he knits together, telling them, that if any of these things be wanting, it will bring on Judgement. Whence in a word, and but in passing, we may *Observe* these two things. 1. That a man will never Communicate worthily, that doth not before hand indeavour to prepare himself for it; And therefore he prefixeth this, *Let a man examine himself*, and then subjoins, *And so let him Eat*. 2. That a man that is not distinct in discerning himself in some measure after the examination of himself, will never aright discern the *Lords Body* in this Ordinance of the Communion; He that takes not up himself, will never take up Christ rightly.

In the words more particularly we have *Three* great things in reference to present Communicating; The 1. whereof is, the great and peculiar use of the Communion, and that is, that it makes the *Lords body* discernible, It puts Christ in a capacitie (to speak so) to be taken up and discerned; The *Second* is, the great duty of a worthy Communicant; and that is, rightly to discern the *Lords Body*, to holden forth. The *third* is,

is, the great Sin that unworthy Communicants fall into; and that is, *They do not discern the Lords Body*; but are like so many Dogs and Swine, who not knowing what delicats are there, they goe about the action, not knowing what they are doing.

The *First* is clear, That in the Sacrament, Christ Jesus his broken body is made discernible to us; else he would not find fault with them who come, and do not discern it; The words also before vers. 24. clear it; *This (saith he) is my Body which is broken for you*; So Chap. 10 vers. 16. *The cup of blessing which we blesse, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* And the sharp Judgements, that come on People for not discerning the *Lords Body*, and so for being guilty of Communicating unworthily, do shew, that not only is our *Lords Body* really present, but in a special manner discernible in this Ordinance.

To clear this a little further, we shal *First* Premise a *two fold* distinction, and then. *Secondly* answer a few Questions that serve for clearing the Doctrine, and for better up-taking of this Ordinance.

*First* then, we would distinguish betwixt these two viz: Looking on the Sacrament as strictly taken, and as contradistinguished from the word; and looking on it as more complexly taken, as including the word; It is in the last sense that we consider the Sacrament here, viz: as taking in, 1. Christ signified and represented by the elements, 2. The word and Covenant to which the Sacrament as a Seal is appended; Therefore the cup is called *The Cup of the New Testament*: 3. The seal of the Sacrament it self appended to the word and Covenant.

2. We would distinguish betwixt Christs broken Body



Body considered as discernible to our understanding only ; and the same considered as it is discernible to our very senses , or as it is apprehensible , when by feeling we may grip it as it were ; and not only look to it , but take hold of it : ( how this is , shall be more Particularly explained and cleared afterward for preventing of mistakes , ) it is in this last sense that we understand *discernible* here , not excluding the former ; so that Christ's broken body in the Sacrament is not only made discernible to the understanding of the right communicant , but he is made Communicable and apprehensible , and there is an union with him attainable in that Ordinance ; and what we said before proves this : he holds out His Body to be received , And He is received in it.

A for the Second , to wit , The Questions to be answered ; they are these Four. 1. In what respect is Christ present and discernible in the Sacrament ? Secondly to what is he made discernible and Communicable ? Thirdly how the Sacrament makes him discernible , and what way it holds him out as discernible to us ? Fourthly what may be the reasons why Christ holds out himself His broken Body , as discernible to us in the Sacrament ?

First , then , in what respect is Christ present and discernible in the Sacrament ? We answer , first , not simply considered as he is the Son of God , nor in respect of any benefit from him as mediator , neither simply as Redeemer ; But he is holden out as incarnate , and so this Sacrament differs from the Jews Passover , which held him out as to come , while this holds him out as come. Secondly , it holds him out not only as become man , but as suffering , as having his Body broken. Thirdly He is made discernible in respect of the end for which He suffered , and had his Body broken and his Blood

Blood shed ; *This is* ( sayeth he ) *my Body which is broken for you , This cup is the New Testament in my Blood shed for the remission of the sins of many : to wit,* of all the Elect ; It holds out Christ Mediator , God-man suffering for us. Fourthly , It holds him out as Communicable and in capacity to be participat of, by us ; Therefore its called the *Communion of His body.* Chap. 10. 16. To tell us that we may be united to him, and made to share of him ; and we are bidden *Take and Eat and all to drink of it :* These last two look to the Covenant and hold out the Sacrament in reference to it, and how our Lord Jesus , First by his sufferings was to purchase a People to himself, and Secondly that he was to be Communicable to his People ; therefore *the Cup is called the New Covenant in his Blood ;* The Cup and the Covenant go together : For though we may consider Christ without the Sacrament ; yet we cannot so well consider the Sacrament without Christ and the Covenant.

*Secondly , To what is Christ made discernible and Communicable ?* We answer : First he is not discernible, nor present after a corporal manner to the bodily eye, though he be really and truly present ; The bread that he gives is his Body , and the Cup his Blood , and yet it was Bread and wine which was given , and not his Body and Blood corporally. Secondly , he is not present and Communicable by any local mutation , by taking us up to heaven to him, or by bringing his Body out of Heaven to us ; But he is these three wayes present and Communicable ; First to our Spirituall senses, to an enlightned understanding, which considers Christs Body broken and his Blood shed. Secondly , To the Faith of his people he is present in his own ordinance ; when his spirit goes along and quickens their hearts, and their



their faith is in exercise. They are made to apprehend Christs Body, and to have an union with him sitting in Glory as really as they partake of the elements with their hand and feed upon them with their mouth and stomach; an union as really as is betwixt the head and the members, and betwixt the root and the branches: These two, the *Spirit* on Christs side, and *Faith* on our side make up a reall union; and therefore though this presence be real, yet it's Spirituall; Faith looking and going thorow the elements takes up Christ according to the end appointed; and this makes the union, even as faith will look and go thorow the word and crediting the word, takes up Christ in it, and makes an union with him; so by vertue of this ordinance there is a Spiritual presence of, and union with Christ Jesus. *Thirdly* A presence to sense, not so much in respect of inward feeling, as in respect of the powerful effects of his presence, though often inward feeling goes along with it; and therefore its called the *Communion of his Body*, and the *wine of Heaven*; And in respect of the mean and way he manifests himself therein, to the eye, to the touch, to the taste, and to the ear, and there is a colour sensible: which is more then is in any other ordinance, where there is but the exercise of one sense; for the more of the outward senses he makes use of, he brings with him a proportionable blessing to the inward senses of the soul.

*Thirdly*, How doth the Sacrament hold out Christ as discernible to us? For answer I shal offer these *Four* wayes. How he may be present to the faith of the Believer in the Sacrament; all which wayes he is made discernible: 1. In respect of the institution; for Christ is here represented by the Minister as giving himself; his authority and warrand is here; therefore himself is here:

here : This though it be common to all Christs ordinances, yet it belongs in a peculiar way to this ordinance ; for in it he is present in a special manner making over himself and his sufferings to us. Secondly, He is made discernible in the Sacrament in as far as it represents him : and though the word hold him out, yet the Sacrament doth so, more fully, clearly, and sensibly, by such and such signes, by bread, and bread broken, representing his Body broken by Suffering ; by wine, and wine poured out, representing his Blood shed : and by wine distinct from the bread, to shew a most true and reall death ; In which respect it's said, *Do this in remembrance of me : and as often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye shew forth the Lords Death till he come again* : Every Sacrament represents Christ, but this represents him in his suffering and dying, and in the end of it : and makes it over to the worthe communicant, Thirdly he is made discernible by this Sacrament in this respect, as it's a seal appended and affixed to the Covenant, serving to ratifie and confirm the Promises contained in the Covenant, and so the Bread and wine, considered in reference to the institution, are a real confirmation of our real partaking of the thing signified, and in some respect make Christ really present : as the giving of a sealed Charter of a house to a man, is the giving him the house : or as the giving of inco'ment by a bit of earth and stone ( being a legall confirmation ) is the giving of that land to the man, wherein he is inco'st : because ( as I said ) it's a legall right to it, and makes it present and discernible to him : even so Christ is made discernible in this ordinance, because we have our right to him which is in the word, in a special manner, confirmed to us in it : for not only doth this ( as other Sacraments do ) confirm the word and Covenant in general,



general, but it hath this peculiar to it, that it confirms Christs making over his dying self to us. Fourthly Christ is here present and discernible, and made so by this ordinance; if we consider the Sacrament as a mean whereby we have Christ Communicat to us, he not only makes over himself Covenant wife: but sealeth this gift: and the Sacrament is a mean of Communion with him thus made over to us: in which respect the believer doth and may warrantably make use of the Sacrament, for his quickening, elevating, and strengthening to cleave closer, and to grip faster to Christ: for which cause it's called the Communion of his Body: and hereby we are said to be made one Body with him: Not but that without the Sacrament it may be and is often so: but by the Sacrament this Union and Communion is strengthened and furthered to the faith, and Spiritual sense of the believer.

Fourthly, what are the reasons why Christ will have his broken Body made thus discernible and apprehensible in this Sacrament? We answer, that he will have it so for these reasons. First for evidencing of and bearing Testimony to his great love to his People, It sayes that a dying Christ so loves us that he gave himself to us; and to the memorie of his death is revived and kept up, He will have his dying self, in a Sacrament bestowed on his People, to keep his love still fresh to them in their remembrance. Secondly for the Publick Professing and testifying our faith in a dying Saviour; For in this Sacrament we profess our Faith in him, and dependence on him; and we say thereby and declare to the world, this my Saviour died, and is able to give me life; which is a piece of Honour and Glory to the Mediator, and a part of our dulle; when we give Publick testimony, that  
we

we think no shame of a crucified Redeemer. Thirdly, The Lord hath, for the edification and benefit of his People, made himself to discernible in this Sacrament; and there is a *Fourfold* edification or benefit that redounds to them by it. First instruction, for they that cannot so well take up the Lord in the word, may be some-what helped to take him up in the Sacrament as a slain Saviour, and as being as needfull as meat and drink, without which, as we cannot live, no more can we live without him; and O! how manie Spiritual lessons may be had by these significant ceremonies instituted by Christ? Secondly There is here edification unto the faith of Gods People: and thus it becomes strengthening, when not only Christ layes in his word, *I have loved my Church, and given my self for her, and they that believe shal not perish*; but we have his ordinance Sealing this: Its exceeding strengthening to a poor weak doubting body which could not easily believe, that Christ would be so kind to a rebell; when he gets a sacred Seal of his kindness, it helps to Believe what is promised. Thirdly It edifies as it serveth to promote the inward growth of Grace, for in the Sacrament Christ is Communicat: and as he is Communicat, life is Communicat, love to God, and to one another is Communicat: and in a word we cannot Imagine a Communication of Christ; but it brings with it strengthening to the inward man. Fourthly there is edification in respect of the believers consolation, whether as, to his Sinne, or as to his Faith, the Gospel in its offer and Promises comes out and sayes, men and women, be it known to you, that Christ is preached to you and remission of sins thorow him, But the Sacrament sayes, Believing man and woman, there is my Body



Body not only broken for all the Elect in generall, but for thee in particular: and this much silenceth the great debate whether I be elected or not, or within the Covenant, or not; for it sayes, O Man, here is a slain and broken Redeemer made over unto thee upon condition that thou close with him in the Covenant, as he offers himself: and so when there has been some wavering and fainting in respect of consolation before, it proves very strengthening of the Believers consolation, considering the nature of the Ordinance: and in this respect the Sacrament is as a Love-token of a kind Husband to his Spoule, who when he is to remove to some considerable distance from her for a time, sayes, take and keep this in remembrance of me, and think that I dearly love thee and will not forget thee, till we meet again.

The second Point of Doctrine is, the great duty called for from a worthy Communicant, and that in short is, rightly to discern the Lords Body made so discernible, and as he is made discernible: The Text confirms the Doctrine: for though a man had never so many good things, Suppose that he had not only gifts but Grace, yea and a Holy frame of Spirit, yet if he be ignorant of what he is called to or a doing in this Ordinance, he cannot discern the Lords Body, and so cannot Communicate worthily: Hence it is that there is so much need of Knowledge, without which a man can no more then a child or a fool rightly take up Christ in the Sacrament.

To open this a litle we shal speak a word to these three,  
 1. To the Object to be discerned. 2. To the act of discerning. 3. To the reasons why this discerning is so necessary a duty.

*First, for the Object to be discerned, It is Christ Jesus,*  
*suffering,*

suffering, dying, and making over himself to his People according to his Covenant; It's Christ, and yet Christ dying, and Christ dying according to the Covenant from which he can never be separated, and especially in this ordinance in Particular, considered with it's end and institution with respect to the Covenant; It's Christ giving himself, and in this Sacrament, according to the Covenant.

Secondly, *For the act of discerning*; It is taken Four wayes, the last whereof is the main. 1. To discern a thing in Scripture is to have distinct thoughts and apprehensions concerning it, Its to take up a thing simply and as it is in it self; Thus to discern Christ present in the Sacrament, is to discern how and whereof he is present. 2. To discern a thing is to difference it from other things, and in this respect a thing is said to be discerned comparatively as 1 Cor. 4. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another?* Thus to discern this Sacrament and Christ in it, is to difference it from other things; considering that it was once common Bread and Wine, but that now it is not so; It is to put a difference betwixt the Sacrament and common bread and wine; and betwixt the Sacrament and the Word and Covenant, yet with respect to the Covenant; as the Seal differs from the Charter; and to difference this Sacrament from other Sacraments, In respect that it looks to a dying Saviour and Communicats him and his benefits that way. 3. To discern a thing, is to have a high esteem of it, such as was the discerning of Meats dayes, and Places; So to discern Christ in this Ordinance, is to have a deep impression and high estimation of Jesus Christ, of his death, and of his matchless love shining therein. To have much

Spiritualitie,



Spiritualitie, Holy fear, awe and reverence in reference to him: Such a fear and reverence as mean men will have before a King or a great man, who when they carrie not ſuitably before ſuch a great perſon, we wil ſay to them, know ye where ye are? So the right diſcerning and uptaking of Chriſt here, is to have a high eſtimation of him. 4. There is a complex diſcerning of a thing in reference to its uſe and end: or we may call it a *Relative* diſcerning, which is *Practicall*, when a man conforms himſelf ſuitably to his diſcerning of the thing, the want whereof our Lord reproveſ in the *Jews*, *Hypocrites* (ſayes he) *Ye can diſcern the face of the Sky, but ye cannot diſcern the ſignes of the times*; and in this reſpect alſo when a man carries unſuitably before a Magiſtrat, it's ſaid to him by diſcerning *Perſons*, know ye where ye are? And this being the main thing here implied, we ſhall ſpeak a little more to it: where in theſe *two* things are ſuppoſed, 1. Some diſtinct uptaking of our ſelves, of our need, and of our hazard. 2. The right uptaking of Chriſt in this ordinance, as to the ſupply of thoſe neceſſities and preventing of that hazard: and this *Doctrinal* diſcerning goeth before that which is *Practicall*, which is a mans ſuitable uſe-making of Chriſt, or ſuitable exerciſing himſelf in reference to his need, and that ordinance appointed for ſupply of his need by Jeſus Chriſt: which is with a reflex look ſometimes on himſelf, ſometimes on Chriſt. And there are in this theſe *five* ſteps which follow one of them upon another. 1. It conſiſts in a ſuitable frame of

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heart

heart, as becomes such a poor sinful unworthy and needy person in the presence of so Holy a Lord, going about such a Holy action: another frame then is called for at our dinner or Supper, or at ordinary hearing the word, or at Prayer: A holy, humble, cheerfull, serious, Heavenly and hungry frame: Holy awe and respect to God making humble, Faith of Gods goodness and rich Grace in Christ shining in this Ordinance, making cheerful: The conviction of need making Sober, and yet very serious and eager in what he is about: It's a frame made up, as it were, of contraries: ardent love and zeal, and yet a calme and composed Spirit to hear what God sayes, To take what he gives, and to behold what he manifests. 2. It consists in an exercise of the mind in meditation, both in reference to our selves and to Christ: Meditation in reference to our own sinfulness and misery: and meditation on Christs love: calling to mind all that he hath done: thinking with delight on Christs suffering and on the end of it, and again reflecting a look on our selves to keep life in this meditation, what was I, when he suffered and did all this for me? and what am I now, when he is offering this to me? To have the picture of a loving Husband hanging by a wife to what purpose is it, and for what use doth it serve, if she never look on it to mind him whom it represents? 3. It consists in an exercise of Graces, It's even (as it is laid in the Song) a making of all the Spices to cast forth their smell: and the putting of all things in good order and studying to have them in good case:

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It's to have love warm to the giver, and closing with the gift of a dieing Saviour, and to have love warm to others of his people for his sake, and because he hath taken us in with others, to partake of the benefits of his love shining in his Death: for love to the head and members, go together: It's to have repentance lively stirred up & sin made heart-pricking and Godly sorrow to flow: the heart made to loath it: and the mind exercised in forming hearty resolutions, Purposes, vows, and engagements against it: but it's especially to have faith stirred up and in exercise, and to have all the senses of Faith (to speak so) set a going: as when the word comes out and sayes *Take ye, Eat ye, this is my Body, which is broken for you.* Faith beholds and gets as clear and satisfieing a view of Christs Suffering and dieing, as if the man saw him with his Bodily eyes: when the hand is stretched out to take. Faith acts Proportionably in stretching out it's hand to take Christ, and not only grips him, but in this Ordinance and according to the end of it, takes it as a pledge of Christ performing what he hath promised, making use of him for the end appointed: when the eye looks on what is done, Faith is considering and taking a view of Christ and of the covenant and of the benefits purchased by him, and sees another thing then the elements, even the wakened up sword of the Fathers justice pursuing the mediator, as the elects cautioner: when the eye looks on the distribution, Faith it sees Christ made as it were believers Common-good given among them, and to every

One of them : when the hand puts the bread and wine to the mouth , Faith hath a way of opening it's mouth and ( as it were ) chewing and feeding upon Jesus Christ, and of strengthening, refreshing and cheering it self in him counting it self well come to with him and secure in him ; and fastening it's engagements to him : all which strengthen our Spirituall life , as eating and drinking doth the natural life : and then when it comes to the taste , Christ relisheth most sweetly to the Believer , so that no Wine doth cheer the natural heart so much as Christ in the Sacrament considered in his love and Covenant, and in the benefits that come by him, do the Soul of the believer ; Faith here considers Christ not only as communicable : but as actually communicated. The fourth thing wherein this discerning consists, is a reflecting exercise, when we have received the Sacrament we are to reflect and consider what we have done, and what we are doing, are we indeed feeding upon Christ ? What is this in our hands ? This bread in some respect is not bread, but Christ ; This cup is not Wine , but *the cup of the New Testament in his Blood* , and by this reflex act , the Believer applies , and confirms himself, having received the Sacrament, whereby his union with Christ is signified and sealed up , he applies and sayes within himself, now Christ is mine, and I am his : and he confirms himself in Christs love to himself and in his interest in him : Now sayeth he, I have gotten no delusion , but the signe and Seal of his blessed Body broken , and of his Blood shed for me :



and me : If unbelief say, have ye gotten Christ indeed ? Yes  
 sayes the Believers faith, having received this Pledge of  
 his love, I have gotten himself and I should Believe it ;  
 and this is to act on Christ not only directly, which is  
 a thing common to the Sacrament with the word, but  
 to act on Christ reflexly : and to perswade our selves of  
 our union and Communion with him, which is the  
 end of this Ordinance : else we take not up Christ as  
 giving a seal ; Therefore the word is, *Take, eat, This*  
*is my Body broken for you* : there is more then a bare  
 signe here : and faith acts not only for receiving, but for  
 confirming it self, that by receiving it hath an union and  
 Communion with him, who is holden out in the Sacra-  
 ment, For if it be a seal and exhibit Christ as a seal,  
 then faith should receive and act on it as such for attain-  
 ing the end that a seal should have, supposing the con-  
 dition to preceed. Fifthly, it consists in an act of spirit-  
 ual affecting, when there is a Holy smacking ( to speak  
 so ) and kissing of Christ, The soul digesting him for  
 the life of the inner man, and thereon delighting, re-  
 joycing, and exulting in him : and so the faith, confi-  
 dence and hope of the Believer are strengthened : which  
 makes him that he is not ashamed ; and upon the back  
 of this ordinarily the Love of God is shed abroad in the  
 heart : and though there should be little sensible feeling,  
 yet the believer finds himself obliged to cheer himself  
 in Christ, and in the Covenant and in the benefits that  
 he hath thorow his purchase : and there is readily some  
 warming of love to Christ, and he is confirmed in the  
 faith of the love of Christ to him : and it is impossible,  
 where these two are, but some Holy tickling of affecti-  
 ons, which flow from the Word and from this Ordi-  
 nance thus rightly gone about ( as has been said ) will  
 follow : and if this be not, That is, if Christ be not  
 thus

thus discerned in the Sacrament, 1. God gets not what he calls for, Christs death is not rightly minded, his Glory and our edification are not promoted, Nor 2. Is the end of the Sacrament attained: neither. 3. Is our comfort furthered: For its not the Ordinance barely, or Ordinary Bread and Wine set apart for a Holy use. But Jesus Christ discerned and received in the Ordinance, that comforts; otherwise, the ordinance in and by it's self will not promote our comfort and growth.

The Third *Doctrine* is, that it is, though a very common and rife, yet a very great sin not to discern the Lords body as he is holden out in this Sacrament discernible; The greatness of which may be easily gathered from what we have discoursed concerning the great privilege of the discernibleness of the Lords body therein; from the horridness of the guilt that it involves in, even *the guilt of the body and Blood of the Lord*, the greatest and most horrid of all Blood-guiltiness; and from the dreadful Judgements and Plagues that follow on it, temporal or bodily, and Spiritual Plagues, yea even eternal Damnation, if Repentance through Grace prevent not: But we must, because of the shortness of time, leave all that might be spoken in the more particular Prosecution of this Doctrine; and shall only give you *Two or Three Caveats* (wherewith I shall close) to guard against mistakes in reference to what hath been spoken; I know it will readily be said, If this be discerning of the Lords body, and if none other do discern it, but such as go about these things, it will be hard for any to discern it. For answer to this I would have you to consider, 1. That there is a more explicit, distinct and perfect discerning; and a more implicit, confused and indistinct discerning of the Lords Body: if we speak of perfection in discerning; who come up to that?



that ? but if we speak of an honest sincere way of aiming to discern, though it be somewhat indistinct and confused, that may be won at ; yea I would not think them in a good condition that rest satisfied with themselves, as being distinct enough in all these things whereof we have spoken ; yet where there is ( as I just now said ) honest aiming at these things, though in a confused and indistinct way ; where faith and love are in some measure acting with a sort of fear & joy mixed together ; when there is a fear to profane the ordinance, and yet the soul loves it so well that it cannot endure to want it, nor Christ in it, There is a discerning of the Lords Body that warrands to draw near. 2. Consider, that there is a general confusion and a particular confusion ( to speak so ) in going about this Ordinance : The general confusion is this, when persons are so very ignorant and confused, that they know not at all what they are doing : a Particular confusion is only in some respect, that is when a Soul knoweth that Jesus Christ is in the Ordinance, and knoweth its own condition to stand in need of him, that it hath many Spiritual wants to be supplied, and that there is much good and a Supply of all those wants to be had from Christ in this Ordinance, but how to come at it thereby, it knows not so well nor so distinctly : A person that is confused in the generall cannot discern the Lords Body in the Sacrament, But one that is confused in a particular, may : and though such an one cannot, it may be, Pitch on a particular promise that suites his need, yet he may fix on Christ and on the covenant in general : which is one of the main things that Faith acts on : and indeed unless himself be acted on by Faith, his benefits fail : and though a serious Soul cannot get a particular promise to settle on, We say it should stick by the Covenant in

general as including all particulars. 3. Consider, that discerning is not to be afflicted to the very instant of receiving, but we would look well what is our aim and endeavour amongst the action, and if habitually we be indeed seriously seeking after and pursuing these things we cannot have them all in our thoughts at once, that is scarce, if at all, Possible; but if the aime and strain of your Souls exercise run this way: and though there be failing in many things, yet this is not a neglective flighing and careless inconsideration: In a word, see if there hath been, First some clear conviction of sin and of your great need of Christ: And, 2. See if there hath been some spraking of Christ in the Ordinance, and He made precious and lovely therein in some measure: and that it was your errand in going to that ordinance to take Christ to Supply your need and take away your sin, and your aime to go about the Ordinance rightly in order to that end, If the strain and Series of your way, in these, hath been honest and sincere, ye have no reason to account your selves (at least altogether) unworthy communicants: Though, when we have done all that we can do, It's God himself who must enable us rightly to discern the Lords Body, and who must graciously pass by many things that will be found amiss in us: according to good King *Hezekiah* his prayer *2 Chron 30. 18, 19. The good Lord pardon everie one that Prepareth his heart to seek God, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary*; So must we say the Good Lord Pardon us, though we discern and take not up Christs Body with that Faith and love, with that distinctness, and clearness, with that delight, choertfulness and joy that become, and are requisite, for such a Solemn action.

A SERMON



# A SERMON

Preached immediatly before the *Communion*.

On Matth. 22. 2.---4.---- *All things are ready, come to the Marriage.*

**T**HERE are many great and glorious things spoken of the Gospel ; and our Blessed Lord Jesus hath made use of many good Similitudes wonderfully opposite, to set it out : Sometimes it's called the *Kingdom of Heaven*, for reasons that we will not now insist upon ; sometimes it's called a *Marriage*, as here and else-where ; some of those Similitudes shew what great and singular satisfaction is to be had in it , therefore its compared to a *Feast* , *Supper* , and *Dinner*, some of them shew the way how we are made Partakers of it : So opening and receiving holds forth believing ; and some of those similitudes hold forth both, as this of a *Marriage*, which points at the strait union betwixt Christ and Believers, and at the manner or way of our entring into this blessed union, on which follows Communion.

We need not insist in opening the Words, which are plain ; we shall only say these *two Words*, to make way for *Observations* ; The *first* whereof shall be, to shew that the scope of the Parable is not to hold forth Peoples coming to the Ordinances, or the Sacraments only or mainly ; but their coming to Christ Jesus himself and to the fat things in the Ordinances : Many come to the Ordinances who come not to Christ and to the feast : that which is called for here, is a real closing with Christ, and an accepting of him for our Husband, on his own

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terms

terms: The second word is, to shew that though the Ordinances be neither the Marriage nor the Feast, Yet it's by the Ordinances that the marriage is furthered and the Feast prepared and made ready? for Faith takes Christ in the word, and strikes hands with him in the Sacrament, when he sayeth in the Word, *be thou for me and I will be for thee*, Faith saith, content Lord, and when he saith in the Sacrament, *Take*, Faith sayeth welcome with all my heart, He being there as well as he is in the Word.

These *two* things being premised, we shall *first*, at once and together Propose some Observations from the words. *Secondly* we shall clear and confirm them; and and then *Thirdly* we shall insist in the application of all joyntly. The *Observations* are these. *First* that in the Gospel there is a clear and manifest making up of a Marriage betwixt Christ and Souls; The preaching of the Gospel is like a mans making of a marriage for his Son. The second is, that this marriage is one of the most excellent marriages that ever was: therefore its called the Marriage of the Kings Son. The *Third* is, that before this marriage can be brought about and accomplished, there are many things to be made ready. The *Fourth* is, that where the Gospel comes, all things are made ready for Souls closing with Christ in this marriage. The *Fifth* is, that the Master of the Feast the **KING** God the Father, and the *Kings* Son the Bridegroom are not only content and willing, but very desirous to have sinners coming to the Marriage, they would fain (to speak so with reverence) have poor Souls espoused to Christ. The *Sixth* is, that when the Master sends out his servants in his name, their great work is to invite to the wedding and to close the marriage. The *Seventh* is, that when People are invited to this Marriage,



riage, it is their duty and greatly of their concern to come. The *Eighth* is, that all they that come may expect a very hearty welcome: therefore they are invited once and again: and it we compare this *Text* with *Luke 14*. We will find there, that the Master orders his Servants to *Compel* them that are invited to come in.

All these *Observations* are very obvious in the Words; and if the Lord would *Graciously* please to help us to speak and you to hear: as they are no unpertinent to our Present Purpose, So they might be made very edifying, strengthening, refreshing and comfortable to us.

We shall in the second Place, a little more particularly clear and confirme every one of them. The *First* was, that, There is a Marriage betwixt Christ and souls held forth and made offer of in this Gospel. We take this for granted: for here is the *Kings Son*, and some bidden to his marriage, and those that are bidden are not worthy: they are all Professors & members of the visible Church, the scope of the Parable being to shew, that the offer of this Marriage was first made to the *Jews*, and again renewed to them, and then from them it came to the *Gentiles*, I shall in passing give you a little hint of the nature of this Marriage in these four: 1. There is by this Gospel a real union made up betwixt Christ and the souls of Believers; Which union is not with the Ordinances, nor with sense, nor with the Benefits which flow from Christ; but with Christ himself Primarily and Principally, and it is so near a tie and very close, that it is preferred unto and goeth beyond the union that is betwixt the Husband and Wife: *Ephes. 5. 30. We are* (says the Apostle) *Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his bones*, Where alluding to that union betwixt Husband and Wife, he not only makes the union real, but makes the one much straiter then the other.

other. Secondly the nature of this union is such, that it is Mutual; the Bridegroom hath in a manner (to speak so, with reverence of his Majesty) no Power over himself, when he is Married unto the Bride; and the Bride hath no Power over her self, but the Bridegroom: So that here there is a sort of mutuall upgiving of the Bridegroom to the Bride, and of the Bride to the Bridegroom; according to those wonderfully condescending words, *Hosea 3. 3. Thou shalt not be for another man, So will I also be for thee*: The Lord hath Rel.evers under a peculiar eye to him, and he hath eyed himself Peculiarly to them, so that (if we may speak thus) neither of them is Master of themselves; The Lord Jesus doth some way account himself not to be master of himself, he is so engaged to them to be theirs and for them; and cannot but be answerable to his engagement; and they are obliged to be no more Masters of themselves, but to be abso'utly and altogether at his disposing. *Thirdly* this union is made up by mutuall consent of Parties, and the consent must be willing; His consent comes in his Word; He says from thence, *Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me*; I come, (as if he had said) in my Gospel to woo, and if any will consent to take me on the terms on which I offer my self, I will be theirs: The souls consent is given by Faith in his word, which is called *John 1. 12. receiving of him*, and is relative to the offer: The offer is indeed backed and quickned by the Spirit, without which it would never be received; yet notwithstanding, that which our faith lays hold on, is not the Spirit, but the word quickened by the Spirit. *Fourthly* consider here the effects that follow immediately and instantly on this Marriage union, Christ with all that



at it that is his becomes ours, and we with all that is ours  
 speak become his; our debt is imputed to him, he is lyable to  
 him- it and must pay it, and provide for us and be our head  
 Bride and Husband; and his righteousness, the Purchase of  
 : So his Death and sufferings, viz. Justification, Sanctifica-  
 Bride- ion, his Spirit, Grace and Glory, and every good thing  
 dom; that he hath, become ours, and at length the Bride is  
 words, taken into the Kings ivory Palaces.

will The Second Observation was, that this is a most ho-  
 der a norable Noble and excellent Marriage; the like where-  
 iarily o never was, nor never shall be from *Adam* to the end  
 er of of the World, it's with the *Kings Son*, with the *Prince*  
 doth of the *Kings of the earth*, the *Heir of all things*, the  
 self, brightness of the *Fathers glory*, the express *Image of his*  
 and person, *who was before all things, and by whom all things*  
 they consist. O! is there any match like this? Is there any so  
 but great and so Noble as He? Is there any in this world  
 rdy whom ye can marry, that is so rich as He? They that  
 and Marry Him shall inherit all things *Rev. 21. 7*. We may  
 in his clear it a little further from five or six Particulars in the  
 door Text. 1. It's an excellent and honourable Marriage in  
 the respect of the Bridegroom who is, (as hath been hin-  
 and ted) The *Kings Son*, who hath not another natural  
 pel Son, He is *he only begotten of the Father*? there is not  
 ms another Mediator, He is the *Fathers equall and fellow*;  
 uls So that if (if we may put an *if* to it) the Father be  
 led great and glorious, so is He, for He is God, the same  
 of- God equal with the Father in Power and Glory; the  
 he wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting  
 yet Father, the Prince of Peace. Secondly this Marriage is  
 is excellent and honourable in respect of the Brides Father  
 rit, in Law, (so to speak) He is the King; God the  
 at- Father, Son and holy Ghost have all a hand in it; and  
 all the Believer married to Christ is *Daughter in law* to the  
 at great

great God, ingrafted some way into the same stock, all layed with the same family. 2 Cor. 6. 18. *I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters* sayeth the Lord Almighty. Thirdly it's excellent and honourable in respect of the Preparation made for it. There was never such a wedding Feast; the dinner is prepared, the oxen and Fatlings killed: but you will say what is all that? Even Jesus Christ himself, He is that *Bread indeed, that drink indeed; the feast of fat things and of wines on the lees well refined; the Bridegroom* is (to say so) the chief dish that the Believer feeds and lives upon for ever; and the Spirituall blessings and benefits that are gotten in him and from him, are as so many dishes of this feast; such as righteousness, Pardon of sin, Peace, and friendship with God, the Spirit, Adoption, Sanctification, joy in the holy Ghost, grace and Glory, the hope of a Crown in those mansions that are in his Fathers House, of a seat with him at his Table and on his Throne; even a share in his whole Purchase; and is not that a feast? Fourthly its Honourable and excellent in respect of its most noble rise, viz. From all eternity, in the bosome of the Father, it bred (to say so) in the Kings breast before the foundation of the World was laid; the Covenant of Redemption was then concluded, and the contract of marriage there drawn, and the blessed Project of it then laid down; *Sacrifices and Offerings thou didst not desire, (saith the Mediator, Psal. 40.) Mine ears hast thou opened, burnt offerings nor sin offerings thou hast not required; Then said I, lo I come, in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God:* The Father gives so many to the Son to be redeemed, of whom he willingly readily, and cheerfully accepts, and offers to satisfie for them, which in due time he doth.

Fifthly,



Fifthly, its excellent and honourable in this respect,  
 That there was never such a concurrence of so many and  
 so great things to commend and further a marriage as  
 there is in this; Such as the making of the World, men  
 and Angels, the incarnation of Christ or his coming in-  
 to the World, his Preaching and working of Miracles  
 for confirmation of his doctrine, his suffering and dying,  
 rising and ascending, his giving Ministers and their  
 gifts: and to make up the Marriage union, the Spirit  
 from Heaven coming along with the word, and working  
 faith in the Soul, by which bonds Christ & the Believer  
 are joined together; Christ by his Spirit apprehending  
 the Believer & the believer apprehending Christ by Faith:  
 was there ever a marriage contract or union bound up  
 betwixt two such vastly and infinitely distant Partics? was  
 there ever such honour and riches attending and follow-  
 ing a match? such righteousness, remission of sin,  
 Adoption, Peace with God, joy of the Holy Ghost, the  
 Spirit, holiness in the beginning and gradual advances  
 of it, fellowship and walking with God, the White Stone,  
 the new Name, the Throne, the Crown, Grace, and  
 Glory, every thing that is good, for the Bride here and  
 Glory in Heaven; In a word Jesus Christ and all the  
 benefits of his Purchase; were there ever such easie  
 termes and conditions? It's only, *come to the wedding;*  
 when the King comes a wooing, let him be welcomed  
 with your hearts consent; when he sayes, *I am content*  
*to marrie you, let your hearts say, Amen, Lord Jesus,*  
*I am content to marrie thee, and to be for thee and for none*  
*other:* and may not I add, was there ever such security  
 and confirmation given of any marriage? it's confirm-  
 ed by the death of the Bridegroom, he hath sealed his  
 Testament with his Blood, and there is no annulling nor  
 altering of a mans Testament when he is dead; and  
 our

our Lord Jesus who was once dead is now alive and lives for evermore, he will never die again, nor make another Testament: Q! beloved hearers, all this is to make let you see that our Lord is in earnest and very willing to espouse you: and indeed it shall not be his Fault, if it be not a bargain, and if it be indeed a bargain betwixt your souls and him, it's a very rare and rich one: Q! be the many rare, excellent, noble, notable and non-such Priviledges and advantages that attend this marriage, and are to be enjoyed by the soul espoused to Christ, even God and Christ, Grace and Glory and all that is comprehended under these belongs to the soul: We must here be silent, lest in speaking of them we darken them by our words; here is an abyss and bottomless depth ready as it were, to swallow up words; we confess we can tell you but very little what they are, nay if all the ablest and holiest Ministers on earth, all the Angels in Heaven were joyned together they could not to the full by very far, tell what an excellent match and marriage this is, even to be matched with the Son of God; and yet this priviledge and honour have all the saints, all Believers, to whom he is wonderful and precious, though alone! not as he ought to be; there is a day coming, when we shall know to satisfaction, that the Father is in the son, and the son in the Father; and that believers are in Christ and he in them; We shall then know the now-in-expressible and inconceivable advantages of this marriage, When He shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and wond'ered at in all them that believe: and till that day the one half will never be told us.

The third Observation was, that there are many things to be removed out of the way, and to be done: many things to be made ready before this marriage can be made up. 1. There is a naturall distance between the Parties,



Parties, that must be removed: God cannot be one  
 flesh with us: and betwixt Parties to be married, there  
 must be some Suitableness of nature: therefore to re-  
 move this distance, and to bring about the marriage, the  
 Son of God becomes Man, that he may be *Immanuel*  
 God with us. God is out nature and so in capacity to  
 be closed with. Secondly, there is a sinfull distance,  
 which also must be removed before this marriage can be  
 made up: For God is a consuming fire to sinners; He  
 and they neither will nor can unite in that posture:  
 Therefore before an offer of marriage can be made to  
 any Purpose, he must give himself for his Church, that  
 he may *Sanctifie and cleanse it with the Washing of water*  
*by the word*: and he follows, that he presents her to  
 Himself a glorious Church without spot and wrinkle, or  
 any such thing: He could not have access to marry his  
 Bride, she was so uncleanly, filthy and loathsome, lying  
 in a most poyful condition, in her blood. as *Ezekiel* sets  
 it forth to the life and at great length, Chap. 16. There-  
 fore to cleanse her, he gave himself for her. Thirdly,  
 ere all this could be done, there behoved a ground to  
 be laid for peace with God the offended party, who  
 was to be father in law: and here comes in the Cove-  
 nant of Redemption, *Psal. 40. 6, 7. Sacrifice and*  
*Offring thou didst not desire, then said I, lo I come &c.*  
 For taking away the curse and reconciling the elect to  
 God, the Father sayes (as it were) I must needs be  
 once in friendship with them, ere I can admit them to  
 my house; and Son if thou wilt Satisfie my Justice, and  
 Pay their debt, I shal give them to thee for a seed, and  
 to be thy Bride and wife: well says Christ the media-  
 tor, Father I accept of the bargain, *Lo I come to do thy*  
*will, O my God*: Whereupon it comes to pass (as the  
 Apostle hath it, 2 Cor. 5. last,) *That he is made sin*  
 for

for us who knew no sin, and we are made the righteousness of God in him : For it was as really agreed in the Covenant of Redemption that he should be made sin for us, as it came to pass in the actual execution of it : and thus way is made for the marriage. Fourthly when this is done, the marriage must be proclaimed through the world by the Preached Gospel, the contract must be opened up and read, and sinners consent called for ; We are told therein, that the Word is made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and because No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he declares him : as it is John I. 14, 15. He comes and reveals more clearly the contract, first in his own Person and by his own Ministerie, and then by sending his servants, and telling that all things are ready. Fifthly, the last thing to be removed is the uncircumcision and stupidity of our hearts, naturally we are given to slight him in his offers, to refuse to open to him, and to let him in, when he knocks, to make excuse, to delay, shift and put him off, nay to refuse to entertain his proposal of Marriage, and to give him a repulse : therefore he comes by his Spirit, and puts in his finger by the hole of the door, and lets some Myrrhe drop on the handles of the lock, and powerfully but sweetly inclines the heart to cast it self open to him ; and then he performs the promises of Sanctification, Circumcising the heart to love him with all the heart, and with all the Soul, as it is Deut. 30. 6. And all these promises are contrived, framed and provided to meet with difficulties in us ; we are told, John 6 44. That no man can come to Christ except the Father that sent him draw him, and Psal. 110. 3. It is Promised, that in the day of his Power His people shall be willing : and whoever ( being made willing ) cometh shall in no wise be cast out, John 6. 37.

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The Fourth Observation is, That by the Preaching of the Gospel, whither so ever it cometh, and by the great things made offer of therein, all things are made ready; Obstructions and what ever might hinder the closing of the Marriage are removed; the Father is ready, having declared his willingness to give his consent; *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him, Matth. 3.* I am well satisfied with him, take him to you for your head and husband: the Son is ready to take all by the hand that will embrace him: Pardon of Sin, Peace, with God, Sanctification, the mansion &c: are ready to be bestowed: the feast is ready, the fatlings are prepared; the Promises are filled with every necessary good thing, *there is bread enough in the Prodigals fathers house and to spare*: the contract is ready, and an offer of it made on the Bridegrooms side: the terms are drawn up and put in Form, and all things agreed upon and ready, even to the Subscription: and there is no more required, but that the hearers of this Gospel heartily consent to take him, and submit to his righteousness and dominion: which if they do, all things shall be theirs, even life eternal, and all things that may fit them for it, Promises for this life and that which is to come, and Christ engaged to keep the bargain: and this is it that is preached every day to you, though, alace! unsuitably: so that it's not now, *Who shall go up to Heaven and bring down Christ from above? or Who shall descend unto the deep, and bring him up from the dead? That we may get him to Marry: but the righteousness of faith, saith the word, is near thee even in thy mouth, &c.* Christs consent is not to be asked or brought from afar, for he hath declared it in his word, and the terms of the contract are, *if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart, that God hath raised*

railed him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: Rom. 10. 8, 9. Engage therefore honestly with Christ, and keep to him: deny your selves and cleave with him, give up your selves to him, and ye shall be saved: and that is all one with this, to be married to him: yea the day of the Marriage is set; and that is the day of the Gospel, the Bridegroom is come to the Church, the Table is covered, and the Ministers the Bridegrooms friends are waiting on, to espouse you to him and to make up the Marriage, so that all things meet and requisite for making peace betwixt God and sinners are ready.

The Fifth Observation was, that Christ the Bridegroom & his Father are very willing to have the match made up and the marriage compleated: therefore doth he send forth his servants with a strict commission, not only to tell sinners that all things are ready, but to bid them come to the Marriage: yea he not only wills them to tell that all things are ready, and to invite, but to *Compel* them (as Luke hath it Chap. 14. 23.) to come in: to stir them up and press them to it: to threaten them if they come not, and to accept of no refusal or nay-say: the evidences of his willingness are many, which I will not now insist upon: as that he hath made the feast, and such a feast, and prepared so for it, and given himself to bring it about, and keeps up the offer and Proclamation of the Marriage, even after it is slighted: all these and many more tell plainly that the Father and Son are most heartily willing: therefore they exhort when this Marriage is refused, O! *Jerusalem, Jerusalem how often would I have gathered you, but you would not: Matth. 23. O! Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou even thou, hadst known in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace; Luk 19.* All these sad complaints, that *Israel would not hearken to his voice, and*  
his



people would have none of him. Psal. 81. 7. That he came to his own and his own received him not Joh. 1. 11. And that they will not come to him that they might have life. Joh. 5. 40. make out his willingness abundantly and undenyably.

The Sixth Observation was, That the great work of the Ministers of the Gospel is, to invite unto, and to endeavour to bring this Marriage betwixt Christ and Souls to a close: the Servants are sent out for this very end, to conclude the bargain: Though he be Lord of all, yet he would not imploy in this work, Angels, neither would he speak immediately by his own voice from Heaven: for by reason of his greatness we could not have endured that way of wooing: but sayeth on the matter to men, subject to the like passions and infirmities go tell that the King hath such a Son, and that ye are sent out to woo in his Name, and make not only offer of Marriage, but request, intreat, perswade, pray and obtest, yea command and compell them to come to the Marriage, by holding forth the curse which comes on them that will not come: and hence are those denounced woes and shaking of the dust off their feet, for a Testimony against them that will not come.

The Seventh Observation was, that it is the duty of all to whom the good news of this marriage come, to come to it, and when they are invited to it, Presently without all delay to yeeld. Needs there any proof of this? do not the Masters sending and the servants coming call for it? do not his preparing of all things, his inviting to the Marriage, and his expostulating with them that come not, and our own great necessities urgently require it?

The Eighth and last Observation was, that all they that come may expect a very good and heartsome welcome,

welcome, none need to fear, that they shal not be made welcome, seeing they are come not uncalled, they shall not sit unserved : The Lord will not look down on such as come : nay he is waiting on to welcome them , and to meet them , as it were Mid-way : as we see in the Parable of the Prodigal, *Luke 15*. His father stayes not till his son come to him, but seeing him afar-off coming, he runs with speed to meet him , and then most affectionately embraced him and falls on his neck and kisses him ; and if the poor child should say, *I am not worthy to be called a Son*. He answers that, not suffering him to speak out all that he had resolved to say ; Even when the debaucht runagate had spent all by riotous living and would fain have told out the sad and shameful story of his grosse miscarriages and great unworthiness he interrupts him and says, in a manner, Son hold thy peace as to that, I know well it is grievous to thee, go quickly and put on the robe, the Ring and the shoes that are provided for thee.

I come now in the *Third* place to make application of all ; and is it possible to speak or hear of this Subject, as becomes ? who is sufficient for these things ; to speak suitably in the name of the Lord , and to lay before you this contract of marriage with such a Bridegroom ? Beloved hearers, are ye in a suitable Posture to tryst with him ? Do ye think that ye are for this Marriage ? is it your serious purpose to close the bargain with him ? If so, Pray the Lord to give us to speak and you to hear the word in such manner as it may be a marriage-day indeed : there are very good news here, and blessed eternally be God, that ever we heard them, or had them to speak of , and that ye have them yet to hear ; they should make your very souls, in a manner, lighter within you, and make you to rouse up your selves,



selves, to welcome them with gladness of heart.

And therefore *First*, we would exhort you all to believe this report; there are alace! but few who do indeed believe, that the Eternal God hath this design of a marriage betwixt him and sinners? Therefore let not your hearts be straitned, only believe that this is the good word of God, that these are the faithful & true sayings of him that cannot lie, and that he is waiting on to ratifie them to all who give them Credit: It's somewhat hard to deliver or receive a word of threatning in faith, but in some respect, more hard to believe a word of Promise and of consolation; It is Proportionably hard to look upon this as Gods own offering of a marriage with his Son, as if he himself were by *vive voice* speaking it out of Heaven, and to believe that this offer is really his: and therefore as I desire (as his Servant) to speak to you, so I would, again and again, Obtest you to be rouzed up, and to rouze up your selves to believe it. *Secondly*, Rouze, stretch and enlarge your understandings, and your hearts and affections, for beholding, conceiving and embracing this rich bargain of Grace: O! consider seriously, from whom it is, For what end it is, how it is brought about, and doth come to you: the height and Depth, the Length and breadth whereof is inconceivable; be Holily amazed and wonder, that the offer of this marriage comes to you, and that he is content to marry you. *Thirdly*, In a word, would you know what we have to do with you, or what is our commission to you this day? This is even it, to tell you that the King hath made a marriage for his Son, and hath prepared and made all things ready for reuniting you to himself; yea this same King that hath made this wedding ready, and hath carved out this way of throughing his designe, by speaking to you in his Word

Word by his servants, speaks to you by us, and we speak to you in his name and tell you, that our blessed Lord Jesus is wooing you; we declare, publish and proclaim it: O! take notice of it, our Lord Jesus is not far to seek, he is here waiting on to cloie the bargain with you: This is our errand to proclaim these glad tidings to you; and what gladder tidings could you wish, then to have it told you, that ye may be happy and easily happy, and that if ye be content to be so, there is nothing that might marre his happiness, but it is removed and taken out of the way: Is not the Father ready? He hath given his consent; is not the Bridegroom ready, when he hath done so much and is waiting on your consent? the Feast is ready, and the Garments are ready, and there is no more to do, but to take and put them on; and faith exercised on him will do both; the Contract is ready, and there is nothing to be changed or altered in it; and He is ready to accept of you, if ye will accept of him; our blessed Lord Jesus says, he is content to marry you; and there is no more to do, but to subscribe your name to the contract: if you want clothes he will give them to you; if ye want a house, if ye want meat or drink, he will provide for you, what ever it be that you really stand in need of for Soul or body, in time or eternity, ye shall have it from him; The promises are filled with all things that pertain to life and godliness, to his life and to that which is to come; there is in effect n thing wanting but your consent, and let not that be wanting, I beseech you.

In prosecuting this purpose, I shall speak a little.  
 1. To those to whom the offer is made, or to those who are called 2. To what they are called to 3. To the terms on which they are called. 4. To the manner

how



how ye should come. 5. To the Peremptorinels of the call, and to the necessitie of coming, And 6. ( If it be Possible to win at it ) a word to some motives, whereby ye may be Pressed to come, and not to neglect the opportunity of such a Precious Season of Grace.

For the *First*; it is not one or two or some few that are called, not the great only, nor the Smal only, not the holy only, nor the Profane only, but ye are all bidden, the call comes to all and every one of you in Particular, Poor and rich, high and low, holy and prophane; *Ho* ( Proclaimeth the Lord, as it were, with an Oyas *Isa. 55. 1.* ) *Every one that thirsts, come, and he that hath no money, Let him come: whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely, Rev. 22. 17.* Our blessed Lord Jesus is not straitned in his call; and we may humbly say in some measure, that we are not straitened in our bowels; in his name we invite all of you, and make offer of Jesus Christ to be your Husband; that ye may have *a room among them that stand by, and be with him for ever*: I say we make this offer to all of you, to you that are *Atheists*, to you that are *Graceless*, to you that are *Ignorant*, to you that are *Hypocrites*, to you that are *Lazie* and *Luk-warm*, to the Civil and to the Prophane; We pray, We beseech, We obtest you all to come to the wedding; *Call* ( sayeth the Lord ) *the blind, the maimed, the halt, &c.* Bid them all come, Yea *To compel them to come in*: Grace can do moe & greater wonders then to call such, it cannot only make the

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offer

offer of the Marriage to them ; but it can make up the Match effectually betwixt Christ and them : We will not, we dare not say, that all of you will get Christ for a Husband , but we do most really offer him to you all , and it shall be your own fault if ye want him and go without him. And therefore before we proceed any further, we do Solemnly Protest, and before God & his Son Jesus Christ, take instruments this day, that this offer is made to you ; and that it is told to you in his name, that the Lord Jesus is willing to match with you , even the profanest and most graceless of you , if ye be willing to match with him ; and he earnestly invites you to come to the wedding : if you can touch at any thing on his side, that is not ready , or at any thing on your side , but it may through grace be made ready if ye will come , you may : but its impossible : for *the Covenant is well ordered and sure*, and that *in all things* , and these words are not the words of men, but the Words of *the true and faithful witness* , which ye must count and reckon for, when we are dead and gone : *He hath killed his Oxen and Fatlings , and prepared his dinner and bid his guests : all things are ready*, in the due order and manner , whether on your side or on his , if ye be willing to step to and make the bargain , he hath drawn up the contract , and sent us out with it to you, to crave your subscription, and if ye be ready for that , he craves no more of you : Now , I put you all to it, whether will ye subscribe it or not ? and I would not put one of you without the reach



of this invitation ; however we be , Alace ! much carnal in speaking his mind , yet we desire not to obscure nor limit our Lords grace , he calls all of you to the wedding , he hath sent us out as his Servants ( though of all the most unworthy ) to close and conclude the contract of Marriage with you this day , if you be willing. Come then, O come and subscribe, and it shall be in very deed a bargain, if ye can through Grace say from your hearts , *We will take him*, then I say to you, *take him and have him with the Fathers blessing* ; our commission is not only to offer him, and to invite you to take him, but to close a bargain betwixt him and you who are content to take him : we would ( as the Apostle speaks , 2 Cor. 11. 2 ) *Esouse you to one husband, that we might present you a chaste Virgin to Christ*, and have you hand-fasted to him , as the word is : and this is very well becoming one of the dayes of the Son of man . and one of such seasons of his grace, to make this offer to great and small , rich and Poor, learned and unlearned , Gracious and Graceless, Hypocrites and prophane ; there is here no exception of persons with him ; the blessed God is content to match with the most graceless and Godless of you , as well as with those who are gracious and Godly ; *There is joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner*, and the price was payed for the Elect , that are yet Graceless , as well as for these of them who are now gracious ; for all were once in the same condition ; Therefore look not with narrow and straitned hearts on the Rich and liberal allowance of our Blessed Lord Jesus.

But Secondly, what is it that we call you to, when we bid you come to the Marriage; It's not to the Communion only, It's not to any of Christs benefits only, it's not to say at first hand confidently that all is yours, or to have a sure knowledge (as ye call it) and perswasion at the very first that it is so; though I heartily wish that ye may find this Perswasion on solid and good grounds; but it is first and mainly to marry the Bridegroom, and then to come to the Feast: We call you to believe, and we declare in his Name, that if ye will betake your selves to him in good earnest, ye shall be saved: If ye will as it were, put your hand to the Pen, and Subscribe your selves heartily content to take him, ye shall most certainly have him and all his benefits: ye that are Prophane take him, but not to live still in your Profanity, but to study Holiness in all manner of conversation in his strength; Ye that are self-righteous take him, but not to live still in the good conceit of your self-righteousness, but to renounce it, and to take him for your righteousness; ye that are blind take him, but not to live still in your blindness, but to grow in grace and in the knowledge of him: whatever ye be, and whatever ill aileth you, take him, but not to continue in the ill, but to get it amended: This sure is no less then to call you to the communion, yea it is more, whether therefore ye come to the Communion or not, we call and invite you all to come to Christ, and to marry Him; which if ye do, we dare Promise you in his name, begun Communion with him here, & full communion with him in Heaven hereafter.

Thirdly



Thirdly what are the termes on which ye are called and may warrantably come to this marriage? I need not stand on the terms on his side, nor to tell you what he promiseth, It's this in a word, *I will be for thee*: He is content to make over all that is his to you; Pardon of Sin, Justification, Sanctification, his Spirit to quicken you, even his whole Purchase to enrich you: in Sum (as it is, *I Cor. I. 31.*) *He is made of God unto you wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*; He hath made all things yours (as it is *I Cor. 3. 21.*) *And in him ye are compleat*, (as the Apostle hath it, *Col. 2. 10.*) Ye need never go out of him, to seek for any thing truly good that ye stand in need of. And on the other hand, what seeks he of you but to be for him and not for another: (as it is *Hos. 3.*) He seeks no hard condition: In Sum it may be comprehended in that word *I Cor. I. 31.* *That he that glorieth may glory in the Lord*: not to glory or boast in any thing or in our selves, but of him, and in him. But for clearness cause I shall draw the termes on your side to these *there*. I You must deny your self, Your lusts, and Idols and your own righteousness: *Where is boasting then?* (sayeth the Apostle *Rom. 3. 27.*) *It is excluded; by what law, of works? nay, but the law of Faith*: Ye then that would Marry Christ and share indeed in the feast; ye must have a sight of that which ye want; and of your own inability to make it up: and that ye are undone in your selves without him, to him that worketh not, but Believeth on him that Justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: That is; to him that expects nothing by his works, but betakes himself to Christ and his righteousness for his Justification before God: and that is no unreasonable condition. Secondly as ye would not glory in your selves, so

ye would glory in him: what ever ye deny in your selves ye would put him in the room of it: If ye dare not lippen or trust your souls to your own righteousness, lippen or trust them to his: He sayes I am content to pay your debt, and since ye cannot pay your own debt your selves, say humbly to him, blessed Lord Jesus pay our debt for us; *He is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth Rom. 10. 3.* When he offers himself, take him thus, and let Faith say, so be it Lord, I accept of the bargain, O! hold to it and quit it not. Thirdly, It is required that ye shall be his and have no Power over your selves: and this takes in Sanctification, dying to sin and living to Righteousness, adorning the Gospel, living answerably to the severall relations ye stand in: for though Mortification and holiness be not the cause, for which he marries, yet it is a condition of the contract; and it well becomes his Bride to be dutifull: *Thou shalt be for me, and I will be for thee,* If he will graciously please to be for us, it's all the reason in the World that we should be for him: Now we know somewhat of the terms, which may all come in under these three, there are many conditions on his side and but few on ours.

*Fourthly* ye would consider the Peremptoriness of this call, to accept of and to Marrie our Lord Jesus Christ on these terms, it's not an ordinary complement, but purposed by the King the Father, and by the Kings Son the Bridgroom: He sends out his Servants, who are come to call you Peremptorily: and there are three Peremptories, that this offer and call hath with it: all which three we carry in our commission, and crave of you to Subscribe to them. The 1. Whereof is; that ye take no other husband but this Bridegroom, there is no latitude left to you in this; ye must by no means enage with



with any other ; It's only for Jesus Christ that we woo, and we seek of you that ye would give him your souls, your hearts , and affections, that ye may be devoted to him and to no other ; and therefore we intimat to you that are Married and Joyned to Idols , that ye must be divorced from those and betake you to him alone The *Second Is*, the Peremptoriness of the terms we speak of; we cannot and ye must not alter one jote or title , Ye must deny your selves, ye must be content to be divorced from your lusts and Idols , ye must renounce your own righteousness , and give up with the law your first husband, considered as a Covenant of works , and run out from the curses thereof to him, which ye will never do; till ye see your own righteousness to be as filthy rags, and reject it , as Part of your enditment , that ever ye trusted to it. Ye must forget your fathers house. 2. As you must deny your selves , so you must close with Christ , and embrace him for your husband and Lord : do not think that ye will or can dwel beside him , that ye can sit and hear him : if ye Marrie him not. 3. Ye must be devoted to him in your conversation , he must needs be your King as well as your Priest ; Ye must forsake Father and Mother and all your kindred and betake you to him , and ye must take up and keep house with him, you must dwel with him , and study to be answerable to the Marriage tye and obligation put upon you, we dare dispense with none of the *Three*. The *Third* Peremptory is this , as ye must engage with no other, and as ye must not alter the terms, so ye must not delay to come and close the bargain , ye must not put off till to morrow , nay not an hour ; *All things are ready, Just now , Now is the accepted time ;* Here stands the blessed Bridgroom, here are the conditions and terms on which he will marry you , and we as the Bridegrooms

friends stand ready to espouse you to him : We dare not be answerable to our Master, nor can we be answerable to our trust and commission, if we shuffle by, or thrust out any of you, if ye do not thrust out your selves, nor may we admite of an excuse from any of you : and therefore let me again say to you, that here is not only a marriage, and of all marriages the most excellent ; but let me beseech and obtest you to come to the wedding ; either come or give a reason why ye will not, or cannot : as you can assigne no relevant reason for your not coming, we dare not accept of any Irrelevant reason, nor admit of any answer but this, that ye will take him : we dare admit of no excuse : ye must not shift nor delay : ye would think that those who were bidden **Luke 14.** might have come, when they had seen their Farme and proved their Oxen : but that would not be with them : So I say it will not be with you, to shift this offer : He is here waiting on to see who will consent and say *even so I take him* : Say it, O say it seriously and abide by it.

**Q !** Are there any here now looking up to him ? Are there any here that would faine have it a closed bargain ? Are there any here that believe these things as the truths of God ? Then we pray you let them sink down into your hearts, and come. And to press this a little further, let me ask, what can hinder the making of this bargain ? is it the want of notice or timeous intimation of it ? That cannot be, ye are clearly convinced of the contrary : Is it because ye will or can be happy without him ? Wo to that happiness : is it any difficulty standing in the way ? That shall be removed, yea as to him it is removed already, and shall be as to you on your closing with him : Pose and put your own hearts to it then, Is there any of you that dare or can find in your hearts to refuse ?



refuse? the Lord is waiting on; his faithfulness is engaged to make out what he offereth; He stretcheth out his hand, and sayeth, *Even so I take you*, if ye will take me; are ye content to stretch forth your hand and to say, *Even so I take thee blessed Lord Jesus*: or if this be not win at to Satisfaction, are there any rousing and stretching themselves to essay how it will go with them? what are ye doing? Is it a bargain or not? ye must say, yea or nay, and that even now; We suppose ye will not say down right, nay: though more then probably many will delay: but this must not be, the Table may be drawn, other guests may be called in and ye removed: we cannot allow you an hours time to advise, especially from indifferency, yea if ye begin to take advisement for shifting a present closure, Christs call and invitation, and your consenting will readily cool upon your hand: *Paul sayes that he consulted not with flesh and blood*: So must not ye consult with flesh and blood in this matter, ye must cast away the beggars cloak, be content to deny your self, quite your lusts, and close with him presently, or ye may never have the like opportunity, There is a necessity imposed on you from the command to come, from the curse and prejudice that abides you, and will certainly overtake you if you come not: ye will be eternallie miserable without him, there is no happiness but in him: The King is on his Throne, the Table is set and covered, the day is fixed, his Servants invite in his name: come therefore, come without further lingering, dallying, shifting or delay: alace! there are too many dayes put by already, ye must put by no moe.

Now let me speak a word further to this purpose, what can marr the matter; what can obstruct its being a bargain? certainly it must be one of three: Either

first : because ye are not content with the Bridegroom;  
 Or Secondly because ye are not content with the terms.  
 Or Thirdly because ye are not content with your selves  
 or with some thing in your selves : As for the *First* : I  
 suppose ye can say nothing against the Bridegroom : is  
 there any other like to him or that can compare with  
 him ; I appeal eyes to you Atheists , and Profane  
 Wretches, that live and ly in your Lusts, Is there a be-  
 loved like this Beloved ? hath He a match in Heaven  
 or Earth ? Is He not the Kings Son ? and if ye ask  
 who that is, ye may hear and know from *Psal. 24. The*  
*King of Glory, the Lord of Hosts, strong and mighty in*  
*Battel, and from Heb 1. 3. The brightness of the Fathers*  
*Glory, the expresse Image of his Person, upholding all*  
*things by the word of his Power* : There is none like him,  
 but the Father, and the Holy Spirit, and as God he is  
 one with them, ye have both the Question and answer,  
*Cant. 5. 9. What is thy beloved more then another Be-*  
*loved ? What is yonder Christ of whom we hear so*  
*much ? The answer is given ( which we cannot stay*  
*now to Paraphrase upon ) He is white and ruddie, the*  
*chiefest, or Standard bearer among ten thousands, Fairer*  
*then the Sons of men ; and if ye would know him more*  
*Particularly, His head is as the most fine gold, He is God:*  
*His locks (or his hair) are bushie and black as a Raven:*  
 there is not the least unseemliness, even in those things  
 that would, to our thinking, seem less necessary, as his  
 hair ; Yea his very Garments smel of Myrrhe, Aloes,  
 and Cassia, ( as it is *Psal. 45. ) His eyes are as the eyes*  
*of Doves by the Rivers of waters washed with milk and*  
*fitly set, O ! so lovely as his Properties are, his Cheeks*  
*as beds of Spices, as sweet flowers : His lips like Lilies*  
*dropping sweet smelling Myrrhe : his hands, as Gold*  
*rings set with Berill : His belly ( or bowels of love and*  
 affection )



affection) *Like the bright Ivory overlaid with Saphires: His legs like pillars of Marble set upon Sockets of fine Gold: His Countenancelike Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars: O! So excellent and stately: His mouth is most sweet, or (as the word is) sweetness, in the abstract: never soul kissed his mouth, but there was a bond thereby laid on it, that it could never again part with him: in a word, He is altogether lovely, or (as the word is) all desires: there is nothing that Souls can desire but it is in him: and there is nothing in him, but what has desireableness in it: This is my beloved and this is my Friend (says the Bride) O! ye Daughters of Jerusalem: this is He, he is sure no common or ordinary Beloved: see if among all the beloveds in Heaven or earth there be any like Him: O! Ye despisers and slights of the Son of God, put your selves to it, Is there any like him to be found? has he not the preference of and the Pre-eminence above all beloveds? He is the only begotten of the Father full of Grace and truth; He is the mighty God, the wonderfull Counseller, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. It would well become us all to be wondering at him, and to be drawing near to him, to behold Him in his beauty; To go forth and Behold King Solomon with the Crown wherewith his Mother Crowned him in the day of his espousals: O! take a stay-  
ed view of him in his Personall excellencies and in the excellent qualifications of this Mediatory Office, and it cannot be that on this ground ye will cast at the Match. Will any of you dare to say it or to abide by it, that ye will not Marry Christ, because ye think nothing of him, or because he is not worthy to be thought of? We suppose none will do so.*

If it be the Second, viz. The terms, That ye are not content with; ye would have Christ, Grace, and Glory, and

and every good thing ; but here it sticketh, you look at it as an hard matter to be denyed to your self and to be wholly Gods, to renounce your own righteousness, and your lusts, & your Idols, to be absolutely devoted to him and wholly dependent on him in your walk, As the evil & the slothfull Servant called him a hard Master ; So do many think of him , though they will not down right say so much in express words : But I would ask you, is there any unreasonable thing here ? Or shall all those termes be sought after, in some respect, in the Marriage of a poor creature like your selves ? And will ye deny them to Christ ? 1. If you get his righteousness ; should ye not deny your own ? If ye come under the Covenant of Grace with him , is there any prejudice to lay by the Covenant of works ? If ye get him for your second Husband, and infinitely best, is it any prejudice to quit your first husband *the Law* ? And in that respect is it reasonable to cast at the bargain , because it is free ? Secondly, Is it not reasonable that ye should give him the room of all things ? If He be able to fill the room of all, let him have his room, as being well worthy of it ; It is your advantage to quit your lusts and sinfull pleasures , your covetousness , Pride, vanity, self conceit, &c. To exchange all for him ; and if ye be not content of this condition, ye say he is not worth the having. 3. Is it not reasonable that ye should be devoted to him in your Conversation ? That ye should no longer Play the harlot , but be as a chaste Virgin to him ? Is it any advantage to you to follow your Idols , that wil go betwixt you and happiness ? If Heaven be an advantage, it is your advantage to quit them and be for Christ ; Or is it any Prejudice to be Holy ? Or will ye quit Christ, because ye must be Holy ? Or will ye refuse him because he will not suffer you, to your ruine, to take your own



own will as formerly? yea it is not only reasonable, but very good and Profitable; Nay there is a necessity you should be Holy, and may not love to him loose your heart from sin? There was another sort of consolation, and other bowels of love at the first making of the Bargain betwixt the Father and the Son; and it was calculated for more honourable designs, and levelled to more Noble ends then any thing the Devil, or the World, or the flesh can Promise to you: and any of you that will stand and stick at the termes that are so just equitable and every way reasonable and easie with all, we take your own consciences to be witnesses that they are so, and you dare not avouch the deny all of their being so: If ye be content to take him, to be reconciled, and made friends with God by his satisfaction; and to be made Holy by his Sanctifying Spirit, to be for him as he shall be for you; It is a bargain: and what, I pray, ailes you at such a bargain; If this be not made, ye shall never be able to make such another: What should ye do then, but come to the wedding; It's not time to dispute or debate, but to close: Say, O! say sincerely, as those do, *Jeremie. 3. 22. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God; When He sayes, as he did to them, retorne ye back sliding children, and I will heal your backslidings; turn it over to him, and say, Behold we come unto thee.*

*Thirdly,* Are ye not content with your selves, or with something in your selves? Do ye indeed think and say, that it is a good bargain, and that the termes are very reasonable and easie; and we have nothing to say against them; but we have, alas! much to say of and against our selves; The bargain pleaseth us wondrous well, and so do the termes; but we are not at all pleased with our selves. *I answer, 1. May ye not then the better quit*

quit and deny your selves, and take Christ in the room and place of self? 2. *I Answer*, Christ makes no such objection, He bids the most Prophane, the most Ignorant and Graceless wretch, the most Hypocriticall dissembler, that never knew what it was to be honest come, and assures them that they shall be welcome, if they will come indeed.

*Object*. But I can do nothing, I cannot keep a word word that I say to Christ; *I Answer*, Engage and consent to close with Christ on his own terms, and doing and keeping shall follow, to give thy consent is that which thou art now called to, and he engages to help thee to perform.

*Object*. But shall I take on an engagement, presently to break it again? *I Answer*, If indeed thou consent; thou mayest sail and break, but the covenant will never be utterly broken nor dissolved; yea thou shalt have surety for thy keeping of it; Forasmuch as (saith the *Apostle*, Heb. 7. 22.) *Jesus was made Suretie of a better Testament.*

If ye *Object* and say; that ye have much sin, that ye are Lothsome, and Abominable; Subscribe this Contract and bargain, and ye have a free and full discharge of all your debt; *I will* (sayeth the Lord *Hosea*. 2 19) *Betroth thee unto me in loving kindness, and mercies*; He will pardon your iniquities; There is no exact or severe seeking and searching out of the debt here, where it's ingenuously taken with, but rather a covering of it; He will also cleanse you from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols.

But it may be thou wilt *Object*, And say, I will rather purpose then engage, because I fear I shall break it.

*Answer*, But is it likely that thou wilt make good such a purpose, who darest not engage? Or will purposes  
and



and resolutions do the business without performing? Purposes of Marriage make not the Marriage? It is actuall consent and engaging which doth that.

But thou wilt *Object*, And say, alace! I am not in a right frame; I am very confused; all things are wrong with me. *Answer*, What is this thou sayest? Will your frame be amended without Christ? will those swarms of Corruptions be beat out before thou take in the King of Glory, who is strong and mighty in Battel?

But thou wilt *Object*. I am not clear as to my interest. *Ans.* Wilt thou not consent till thou be clear, that is as much as to say, thou art doubting, but that thou wilt not put it out of doubt; if thou be unclear as to thy Subscription, rather Subscribe & write thy name over again: if ye have not at all Subscribed, take now the pen and do it; say, Lord Jesus, I come to thee and will be thine.

*Object*. Alace! fain would I come to the wedding, but I cannot come, it will not do with me; I would fain believe, but my Faith is not Prompt and ready. *Answer*. Is not the Covenant provided with an answer to that also? It calls for nothing but for your Subscribing; and if ye say ye cannot; look well that it be not a shift; it comes to this, yea or nay, and if ye say, ye cannot say Yea in Faith, which yet thou wouldest fain be at; is there not a promise of Grace, that though your hand be as it were withered, if ye mint and essay, you shall be enabled to stretch it forth: Faith may come in the very essaying to grip him, only essay it and it shall go with you.

*Object*. I have essayed it often, and it hath not gone with me; *Ans.* Essay it again and cast a new knot; If your evidence be not clear, Subscribe over again.

*Object*. But it goes not with me, when all is done, I cannot

cannot believe, I would Subscribe, but I cannot write (as it were) I cannot distinctly act Faith. *Ans.* What is that? Our Lord stands not on that, though you cannot write well, do as ye can: It's strange to see, how some Subscription is almost like a scratching with Crow-toes, yet it's a valid Subscription; some again will write down their mark in place of their name, and that also where it is well known, is admitted as valid; if you cannot (as it were) write your name in fair and legible Letters, set down some Mark, if it were but two scores or lines in any form or figure, If ye cannot act Faith so distinctly, come on as you may; if ye cannot to your satisfaction say, *Yea*, with the heart, say it with the mouth, striving and longing to have thy heart brought up; force thy self (If I may speak so) to believing; *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart, that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, Rom. 10. 9.* Endeavour to make thy Mouth engage thine heart; bind thy self fast to Christ, even in a manner whether thou wilt or not: act Faith with the understanding, labouring honestly to bring up thy Will and affections and though ye win not now to a Faith that is distinct, it shall come in a due time: essay to set open the door, and it shall go with you.

*Object.* But my heart says, all these are but fair words? *Ans.* Away with that blasphemy, They are the truths of God: essay then, O! essay Seriously this way of Believing, and ye shall find power meeting you, The Pen is, as it were, lying by you, and albeit ye cannot write well and be distinct, take the Pen, and Christ shall (as it were) lead your hand and guide it, to write so, as it shall Pass in Heaven for a Subscribed consent: set your selves to give him a welcome, and he shall account it to be



be a welcome. Say now, what more ye have to say ; lay out your scruples ; this word, *all things are ready*, will answer them all : the garment is ready to be put on, yea Jesus Christ is your Wedding Garment, take and put him on : He is the cure for all your diseases, apply him for the cure of them all ; ye cannot certainly be clothed, before you put on the garment : neither can ye be Healed, before ye apply the cure : ye cannot by any means be rich, till ye marry him. But beside all these, there are several other needlessly disquieting scruples, there are many other shifts (and alace ! that there should be such trifling, if I may call it so, such whining, as it were, and standing on Ceremonies (to speak so) with our Lord,) among which this is one, I wot not If I be in the Covenant and Contract of Redemption, I know not if I be one of Gods elect : *Ans.* What is this ? ye know not well what ye say : have ye any thing to do with that secret by a leap and at First hand ? are ye not called to Marry Christ ? Is not that his revealed will to you ? I protest in his name, this is the thing that ye are called to : and will ye make an exception, where he has made none ? Or will ye shift obedience to a clear command, upon a supposed decree, which you cannot know but by the effects ? Will ye reason so in the matter of your eating and drinking ? upon a supposition that God hath decreed, that ye shall die to Morrow or within a few dayes, will ye this day not take your dinner, nor make use of any refreshment, till that supposed day come ? Or because ye know not, if God hath appointed you to live so and so long ? Will ye forbear therefore your callings ? Or will any of you, in seeking after a match in the World, reason so ? Will ye not seek after nor Marry such a Woman, till ye be clear that God hath decreed her to be your Wife ? When  
or

or whom would ye Marry at this rate of reasoning? But  
 2. Because there is a sort of facultie and facilitie here  
 to dispute against God, I answer by way of question,  
 were there ever any that had that doubt cleared to them  
 before they came to Christ? whoever would have come  
 to him, if they had stayed till that had been taken out of  
 the way? Or hath the Lord told that to any before they  
 came? Hath he said to them, believe for ye are Elect-  
 ed: but his method is thus, believe, and ye shall know  
 in due time that ye are Elected. 3 Is there any that  
 can say, that the offer or the refusall of the match de-  
 pended on this? If any of you will say, because I was not  
 elected, he refused me: He will answer, *How often*  
*would I have gathered you?* And there will need no  
 more ground for sentencing Professors of the Gospel to  
 destruction, then this, Man, woman, thou hadst the  
 offer of the Gospel and refusedst it, therefore go to thy  
 place: he will not Judge you according to the decree of  
 reprobation, but according to his call and your disobe-  
 dience to it: And further ye may take Christs *Answer*  
*to this Objection*, from John 6. 39. Where there are  
 two wills, or rather two things willed, of equal extent  
 betwixt the Father and Christ in the Covenant of Re-  
 demption, under which all the elect come: The First is  
*vers. 39. This is the Fathers will which hath sent me,*  
*that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing;*  
 But, as if he had said, this is not it that ye have to do  
 with at first hand: Therefore *vers. 40. He sayes. And*  
*this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that*  
*seeth the Son and Believeeth on Him may have everlasting*  
*life:* Not that all the elect should know that they are  
 elected, before they Believe; but that he that Believes  
 in Him, may know that he is Elected: He gives the  
 same promise to them that Believe, that is given to them  
 that



But that are Elected : and they are distinguished, because He would have them to come under distinct considerations.

And now to conclude, Is there not need, great need to come? and have ye not good warrant to come? Lay by, therefore, seeking satisfaction to sense and carnal reason: and while the Lord sayes, *All things are ready*, come to the Marriage: It will be greatly to your prejudice, to sit or shift the invitation: ye have the Contract laid before you, alter not the Terms, dispute not, delay not: This is our Commission to you to day, We tell you that the King hath made ready for the Feast, yea all things are ready come then and let there be no more debate about the matter: if ye will but say it, and say it in earnest, *Here Lord Jesus I give up myself to thee, and though my consent be now but confused, I shall endeavour, through Grace to give it more clearly and distinctly another time*: It shall go well with you: only deliver up your selves to him: and in the Lords Name I tell you, that ye shall be dearly welcome: as many as come humbly lothing themselves, wondering at the free Grace of God, and Highly esteeming of Precious and lovely Jesus, and adventuring to hazard their souls on him on his own terms, and to take him for their Husband and Lord: It shall not be accounted Presumption in them so to do: nay (as it is Cant. 3.) *The bottom of his Chariot is Paved with love, and it's for the daughters of Jerusalem*: It is made for carrying and keeping Believers: leap hither (if I may speak so) and ye will fall soft, into a sweetly Perfumed and soft bed, even in the arms of Christ: There was never a Carpet, never a feather or down-bed so soft as that is: only come and cast your selves over on it: Though ye think that ye cannot apprehend and take hold of him, He can and will apprehend and take hold of you; and He is so very tender

tender hearted, that he will kisse you and even weep over you for joy, ( as it were ) on your neck : and if ye have no Garments, Rings or Jewels ( to speake so ) to adorne you, He will give these to you : Come forward then, come, O ! come, and let it be a day of Covenanting with him : and in signe and token thereof give up your names to him : and for confirmation, take the Seal of His Covenant the Sacrament with your hand, and bless Him with your heart, that so heartily welcomes you ; and the blessing of God shall come upon you that come on these terms.

## A SERMON

Preached after the Communion,

On PHILIP. 1. 27. *Only let your conversation be, as becometh the Gospel of Christ.*

There are two great works that the Ministers of the Gospel have to do ; one is to engage People to Christ, and to perswade them to receive him and close with him ; The other is to induce them to walk worthy of him : Col. 2. 6. *As ye have (saith the Apostle) received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.* Paul through the hand of the Lord with him, had engaged the *Philippians* to close with Christ, and as it were to conclude the Contract betwixt him and them : and now being aged and in Prison, and not knowing certainly if ever he shall see them again, He commends this to them in a speciall manner, whether he see them or be absent from them ; that only they would let their Con-  
versation



versation be, as becometh the Gospel of Christ: As if he had said, ye are priviledged with the Gospel, and have embraced it, and are eminent in the Profession thereof; let me therefore beg this of you; that your Conversation may be answerable to it. The adverb *only*, intimates to them, that this was so necessary and of so great concernment, that in a manner it was their *one thing* they had to do, In comparison of which, in a manner, they had no other thing else to do, whether he were Present or absent; This in some respect, is all that he requires of them: And the Argument whereby he presseth it, is, *that whether he come to them or not, he may hear of their affairs*; And that he desires and expects, whether he be at Liberty, or in Prison and bonds; that they will thus especially testifie their respect to him; which would be more refreshing and acceptable to him, then their Communicating to him in his affliction, beyond all the rest of the Churches, was, and for which he commends them, Chap. 4. And in the close of the verse he instanceth *Two Particulars*, wherein he would have their Conversation soiting the Gospel; or *Two qualifications* of a Gospel-Conversation and walk: one is, *Unity that they stand fast in one Spirit*, Another is, *Purity in the Faith*; *that with one mind they strive together for the Faith of the Gospel*.

The First Qualification is, joint and united stayedness and steadfastness, that they be not fleeting and wavering to and fro, easily disjointed and divided one from another, as many light Professors are: And the Second is, that they be studious in and striving for the Purity of the Doctrine of Faith, and serious in the Practice and exercise of Faith; Desireable and excellent Qualifications of a Christian, viz. Purity, Solidity, and seriousness in Religion.

We shall at this time speak of the exhortation, *Only let your Conversation be, as becometh the Gospel of Christ*: Where, by *Conversation*, we understand the whole of a mans carriage and walk towards and before God and men; and by the *Gospel*, the whole Doctrine thereof, as it respects Faith and manners or Practice, but here more especially, as it respects Faith in Christ, both as it is opposed to *Heathenisme*, and as it's opposed to the Law or Covenant of Works: To walk then *as becometh the Gospel*, is to walk answerably and suitably to it, and in the whole of their carriage and Depo'tment, to make a manifest difference to appear betwixt themselves and all other Persons; as they are dignified, and as the Gospel requireth.

The point of *Doctrine*, to which we would speak from these words, and which lyeth obviously in them is; That, they who are Priviledged with the Gospel, ought seriously to endeavour, and to make it their great business, to have their Conversation suitable to, and becoming the same. This is some way the *one thing* required of all the hearers of the Gospel, of all that are Baptized in the name of Christ: We need not stay on the Proof and reasons of it, and the lesse, that none will dare down-right to denie it, and that the reason a.e. so obvious.

There are *three Uses* of it, that we would speak a little to; The *First* is for instruction, to teach us our dutie: The *Second* is of Regra'e and expostulation, that the Professors of the Gospel, and of the Name of Christ should be so unlike and unanswerable to it: The *Third* is of Exhortation to this so verie necessarie and so much called for a dutie, as the Compend of all duties, which we would presse and set home by some consideration drawn from the necessitie and advantage of it.



As for the *First*, I think I may say, that if ye had the *Apostle Paul* Preaching to you who have been Communicants yester-day, this would be the great dutie which he would enforce upon you: *Only let your Conversation be, as it becomes the Gospel of Christ*. Ye will readilie say, what is that? I confess it's hard to tell, it's so verie Marrowie and comprehensive, but it will be as hard to practise it, and a great deal harder: O that we were all Breathing and Pressing seriouslie and hard after it! However, we shall in the first Place, and in the generall desire you to consider these few Scriptures that hold it out, as namelie, *Luke 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Tit. 2. 10, 11, 12. 1 Pet. 1. 15. Philip. 3. 20.*

More Particularlie, from other Scriptures ye may take it up in these: or if we read and consider the Gospel aright, we will find these *Five* things in it, which require a walk suitable, or a walk with respect to them: and such a walk becomes the Gospel. 1. In the Substance of it, Our blessed Lord Jesus is (as it were) the *Text* on whom the Gospel is a notable Commentarie, and what he did and how he suffered, is proposed as a fair Copie for us to write after in all things wherein he is set forth to us as a pattern for our Imitation. 2. That from whence the Gospel comes, and which gives it it's rise, even the Love of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holie Ghost, in whose blessed breast it bred; and *To walk as it becomes the Gospel*, is to walk suitable to that love. 3. To walk as becomes the Gospel, is to walk suitable to the great offers of it, and to the Promises contained in it, *The exceeding great and Precious Promises*, whereby we are made Partakers of the *Divine nature*: To walk suitable to all the excellent things, the sublimelie Spirituall and divite things Promised. 4. It is to walk suitable to the Commands and directions of

of the Gospel, in reference to all duties : *having therefore* (saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. 1.) *These Promises let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.* 5. It is to walk answerable to the obligations which the Gospel lays on us, and to the consolations that flow from it to us : If then we would walk as becomes the Gospel of Christ, we must have a due respect unto all these.

If it should be enquired what is it to have a respect to these in our walk ? We answer, it supposeth and includeth these things. 1. A likeness and conformitie, that what is called for in the matter of dutie, or offered in the Promise, we studie to be like it, *We all* (saith the Apostle 2 Cor. 3. 18.) *Beholding, as in a Glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.* 2. Our suffering none of these things to ly by us unimproved, & our endeavouring to make the right use of them : to suffer none of the Promises relating to Justification, Sanctification, or any other Spiritual priviledge and benefit to be useless, but to be laying due weight on each of them ; and more especiallie to be making right use of Christ the Mediator, in whom all the Promises are yea and amen : ( for certainlie they neither walk as it becomes the Gospel, nor are worthie of it, who make not use of him ) to be making right use of the Ordinances, word and Sacraments, and of all appointed means of edification, Publick, Privat and secret, and to be making right use of the comforts of the Gospel, whereof there is through Christ a verie large and liberal allowance on Christians. 3. It includes our delighting our selves in the Gospel, our endeavouring to be cheerfull, to be cheered and made glad by the good things in it : A heartles drooping & discouraged life and walk is verie unbecoming the Gospel of Christ.



We may in a word, briefly sum up a Christians Conversation as becometh the Gospel, in these *Three*; 1. That he shine in his Conversation, so as he may adorne the Gospel, 2. That he improve, by the exercise of Faith, the Promises of it. 3. That he endeavour to live on the comforts of it, and to live in the hope and expectation of the comfort & refreshing, from the Presence of the Lord, and the fulness of joyes therein, that are coming: some-what of all these *Three* is couched in those Words, *Acts. 9. 31. Then the Churches had rest, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied*: They walked in the fear of God in respect of their Practice: and in respect of their Faith, they walked *in the comfort of the Holy Ghost*; and they were *Edified*, grew and increased, not only in respect of their number, but as to their Spiritual state and stature; And thus, *the Peace of God which passeth understanding, guarded their minds and hearts through Christ Jesus.*

Or ye may look on the Gospel as calling for these *Two* things, in our external and visible conversation; 1. That none get any occasion by our walk to reproach the Gospel: that none may have it, on any just ground given by us, to say, take up such a professor of the Gospel; O! What prejudice to the profession of the Gospel, is done this way, by the untender walk of many of it's Professors. 2. It is to walk so, as our Carriage may be a Commendation to the Gospel, & an Ornament to the Profession of it, that, not only, reproachers may be ashamed,

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who falsely accuse our good Conversation; but by beholding of it, they may be made to glorifie God: that we may shine as lights by our blameless walk; so holding forth the word of Life (being practicall Preachers) by our convincing and edifieing carriage, in our severall Capacities, Callings, Stations and Relations, that they who are not won by the word, may be won to the love of Christ, and of Holiness by our exemplary conversation, and by the humble, tender and conscientious discharge of the duties of those callings and relations; the Husband being kind and the wife Tractable, Child and Servant obedient, &c. Excellent directions to this purpose are given by the Apostles, and particularly by *Paul* and *Peter* in their *Epistles*.

More Particularly (which yet will be but somewhat generall) We may consider the Gospel. 1. As it holds forth and calls for Holiness, and so, for a Holy and Gospel-becoming Conversation. And 2. We would take a view of the nature of this Holiness.

*First* The Gospel calls for Holiness in a sixfold extent; a failing or defect in any of which, makes a Conversation in so far to be unbecoming the Gospel. 1. It calls for Holiness in respect of all sorts of duties, *be ye Holy* (saith *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15.) *in a'l manner of Conversation, as God is Holy*: in Prosperitie and Adversity: in Religious, in Morall, and in Natural Actions; *for it is written, be ye Holy for I am Holy*. 2. It is extended universally to all Particular and individuall duties and actions of all those sorts,



sorts ; it reacheth all manner of Conversation ; The Divinely inspired Scriptures instruct the man of God , how he may be made Perfect in every good work , as it is , 2 Tim. 3. And a failing in thought , word or deed is unbecoming the Gospel. 3. It is extended in respect of the subject , viz. the whole man , and Presseth that he be Sanctified throughout , So 1 Thess. 5. 23. The Apostle Prays , *the God of peace Sanctifie you wholly , and I pray God your whole Spirit Soul and Body , be Preserved blameless ;* And 2 Cor. 7. 1. It puts to cleanse from all filth of the Flesh and Spirit : It requires that the Judgements be kept sound , and that no error or untruth be admitted by it , that the *Mind* be sober , and free from any sinfull distemper ; that the *affections* be Sanctifiedly regular , and that they debord not : That the *will* be straight and brought up to the straight rule of obedience ; and that the *Conscience* be kept tender , that it be neither darkned nor impure ; That the *members of the Body* be yeilded as instruments unto righteousness. 4. It is extended to holiness , in respect of all capacities , Callings , Stations and Relations , of Husbands and Wives , of Masters and Servants , of Parents and Children , as the *Apostle Paul* Heartily and frequently doth in his *Epistles* , namely , Col. 3. and 4. Eph. 5. and 6. Tit. 2. Where he presses it upon Servants by this Argument , *That the Doctrine of God may be adorned* : and on wives by this , *that the Doctrine of God may not be blasphemed* , and on all thus , *That the grace of God hath appeared in the Gospel* ( for that very end . 5. It's extended

in respect of all times and Places, 1 Cor. 15. ult. We are Commanded *alwayes to abound in the work of the Lord*: in the whole tract of our conversation, at home and abroad, in secret and publick, in prosperity and adversitie. 6. It's extended to and requireth Perfect Holiness, Holiness at the highest pitch, So *Matth. 5. Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect*, And 1 Pet. 1. 15. *Be ye Holy in a'l manner of Conversation, as God that callet<sup>h</sup> you is Holy*: to be at exact Holiness, even to have it perfect in respect of degree in our designe, desire and endeavour, *To be Purifying our selves, even as He is pure* (as it is 1 John 3. 3.) Having Him for our Pattern.

If any should here *Object*. And say: to look on the Gospel thus, as carving out a Christians duty and walk so very exactly, in this extent and at this pitch, makes it appear to be very strict, and to differ little or nothing from the Law; for what more doth that call for? So that this Doctrine seems to be legal. I *Answer*, This *Objection* seems to Imply a great mistake; for the difference betwixt the Law and the Gospel, is not so much, if at all, in this; that the Law requires more then the Gospel; but that it requires what it calls for, on another Certification: The Law and the Gospel agree in these *Three*. 1. The Gospel requires Holiness in as large an extent as the Law, so that whatever is a sin against the Law, is also a sin against the Gospel; For *Christ came not to abolish but to fulfill the Law*. 2. It requires Holiness at the same Pitch or in the same degree;



degree ; for the Gospel commands us *to be holy as God is Holy , and to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect* : It dispenseth with no sin , nor with any degree of any sin , nor with the least *Omission* of any dutie , more then doth the Law. 3. The Authority and obligation , that lyes on and binds to Holiness , is no less in the Gospel , then it is in the Law : yea , we may say , that the obligation is in some respect greater.

But they differ in these *Three*, 1. That the Gospel taketh in the Penitent , though he hath not been perfect and exact , and gives him pardon through Christ : which the Law doth not. 2. The Gospel calleth for dutie in the strength of Christ , and furnisheth strength for dutie : but the Law now furnisheth no strength , but only supposeth it ; It only giveth out the word of Command , requiring of men that they walk in the strength which they had once in *Adam* ; so that , though the Authority and Obligation be the same : yet the manner and Certification is not the same ; if there be any breach or failing , the law sayes , *Thou shalt certainly die* : But the Gospel ( as I said ; admits of Repentance and fleeing to Jesus Christ , *who took on him the curse of the Law*. 3. The law accepts of no dutie , if it be not exactly perfect in the degree : But the Gospel accepts of duty , though imperfect , if there be sincerity : It accepts on Christs account of a man , according to that which he hath , if there be a willing mind. So then , when ye are called to walk as becomes the Gospel : ye would know that ye are not to dispense with your selves , in the least , in any duty that the law calleth for : though the Gospel doth indeed more sweetly call for it , Its *Exactors* and officers being peace and righteousness : It's the same Holiness in the matter , extent and degree , which the Gospel calleth for , with that of the Law ; though it much differeth , as to the Manner of calling for it.

*Secondly.* That we may know, what is called for in the Gospel, as a walk or Conversation becoming the same: and so may yet further know the nature of Gospel-holiness, ( which was the *Second* thing we proposed to speak to ) Ye would consider the Gospel, as it's distinguished from the law, and as it holds our Grace: Where we would speak, 1. Of some qualifications, that the Gospel addeth, as to the Performance of the same duties, which the Law requires. 2. Of some particular duties which it doth more especially call for, and which were not, ( severals of them, at least ) so proper to the law.

As for the qualifications of dutie, which the Gospel addeth, they are these. 1. A new end; for our end in duty now is, not to gain life by it, but simply to glorifie God, as we may see. 1 Cor. 10. 31. I will not say, but this end was in the Covenant of works; but in the Gospel this is not only the main end, but some way the only end, and the other quite excluded and thrust out; and when we speak of the glory of God, we take in the glory of Grace and the glory of the Redeemer, who furnisheth Grace. 2. It adds a sweet Motive, viz. love to Jesus Christ: *The love of Christ* (saith the Apostle 2 Cor. 5. 14.) *Constraineth us*: It is no more meer awe, that is the Motive, but love and love to God in Christ, who hath redeemed and bought us. 3. The Gospel qualifies our obedience and walk, as to our undertaking thereof: that it be not in our own strength, but in the strength of Jesus Christ: it teacheth us to go through the wilderness *leaning on the Beloved*, and leaving the burden of the work on him; trusting more to him, then to our own feet or strength, as knowing that we cannot crippe cut the way, nor do any thing without him, as it is. *John* 15. 5, 4. There is a Qualification,



Qualification, required in respect of the frame of our own heart, with respect to a twofold fear, one is a filial and reverentiall fear, that proceeds from Faith, in which we are to *work out the work of our Salvation*. The other is, that it be without the fear that is opposite to the former as the word is. *Luke 1. 74.* The Gospel calleth us in our walk, to have a fear without fear, a reverentiall fear, without slavish fear: it would have us neither to be altogether afraid because of the Law, which hath terror, nor to be without filial fear, for that is presumption, but to have faith and fear mixed together. 5. The Gospel qualifies our walk in spiritual duties, in respect of our cheerfulness in going about them, which are to us (in so far as we have corruption in us) Heavy and grievous; but the Gospel maketh them easy and light, as it is said, *Matth. 11. ult. His yoke is easie and His burden light.* Though it be a Yoke, yet it is portable and light, when Christ and the Believer are yoked together: nor are any of His Commands grievous, as it is *1 John 5. 3.* 6. Though the Gospel call for Holiness, yet it makes the person to be denyed to it, It's a Gospel-walk to be Holy, but it takes in that with it which we have *Philip. 3. To forget those things that are behind*: to be denyed and dead to all our attainments; and to *count all but loss and dung for Christ*: It was indeed a law-walk to be blameless, but it is a Gospel-walk to study to be blameless, and pressing hard after perfect Holiness: and yet to forget it, and to be denyed to all conceit of it: and to be desirous to be found in Christ Jesus, not having our own righteousness, which is by the Law, but the righteousness which is by Faith.

As for the Particular duties, at least some of the duties, that are more particularly called for in this walk and Conversation becoming the Gospel: Ye may take these

shortly. The **First** whereof is, a living by Faith : and that is, when a Christian hath Faith, and the exercise of it on Christ, as it were, another life to him, for though there was a life of faith or of dependance on God in *Adam* before the fall, yet not the life of Faith in a Redeemer : *I live* (saith the Apostle *Gal. 2. 20*) *Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that now I live in the flesh, is by faith on the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* And this is to be taken along the Christians walk, even a Continued application to and of Christ : This is that which he first betakes himself to, for Righteousness : yea, when right, he employs him constantly, as *He is made of God to him Wisdome Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption* : As he is said to be made to believers, *1 Cor. 1. 30*. The second is, the exercise of Repentance, which was not called for as a duty by the Law, though much ruine followed the breach of it : This was the sum of *Johns* and of *Christs* preaching : *Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand* : Though it be, Alace ! a very much slighted exercise : yet dayly Repentance notably suiterh a *Conversation becoming the Gospel*. 3. A Gospel-Conversation would be in, and with the exercise of Hope : there was love to God under the Law, but not so properly the exercise of hope ; There was, it's true, hope in respect of the thing promised, in case there had been no violation of the Law ; but not as respecting Christ Jesus, who is the believers hope, *Col. 1. 27*. *Christ in you the hope of Glory* : I doubt much if the exercise of hope be well known to Christians in this Generation, few know what it is to *Hope to the end*, as *Peter* exhorts, *1 Pet. 1. 13*. A **Fourth** Is, the denyall of our selves, and the exercise of Humility ; for as the Gospel calleth for the denying of our own righteousness, So for the denying of our

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own wills, affections, lusts, appetits, and desires; There is another sort of love-singleness and denyedness called for now, then under the Law; because we are bought with a price, and are not our own, as it is, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *If any man will follow me, let him deny himself,* saith our Lord *Matth. 16.* A Fifth is, much Mortification, That we be crucified to the World, to our self, and to our sinfull lusts; *I am Crucified* (saith Paul, *Gal. 2.*) *with Christ, yet I live.* so Chap. 6. He tells us that he was crucified to the world, and the World to him: And he exhorts Christians, Col. 3. 5. *To Mortifie their members which are upon the Earth. Fornication, Unclean-ness, Inordinat Affection, Covetousness, &c.* A Sixth is, Much Patience, Meekness, Forbearance, Long-suffering; wherein our Lord hath given and left himself for a new such Pattern: *Matth. 11. 29 Learn* (saith He) *of me for I am meek and lowly in heart* So, 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22. And hence, Meekness, Patience and forbearance are so much and so frequently called for in the Gospel, and on Gospel grounds, as great duties becoming the Gospel, or as special pieces of a Gospel-conversation. The Seventh, Is, a heavenliness in our conversation, a denyedness, a holy abstractedness from earthly things, and living in Heaven, while on earth, and a living more where we love, then where we live: *If ye be risen with Christ,* (saith the Apostle. Col. 3. 1.) *Set your affections on things above; not on things on the earth;* Which is also called for, Philip. 3. 20. By his own example proposed for our Pattern, our Conversation, (saith he) *is in Heaven, whence we look for the Saviour;* To be much in our affections set on the things that are on the Earth, to be earthly minded is unbecoming the Gospel. Ane Eighth is, a great eye on Eternity, an eye, whose looks are not bounded within time;

but pierce thorow time, and all the Fogs, Mists, and Clouds that are in it : It's much unbecoming the Gospel to have our hope much ; not to say, only, in this life, or to be much taken up about the driving of Earthly designs and projects : but it's a good qualification of a Gospel conversation, to have an eye before us on Eternal life, 2 Cor. 4. ult : *While (saith the Apostle) We look not on the things that are seen ; but on the things that are not seen, and Eternal.* A Ninth is, Much joy in God, much cheerfulness and heartiness ; therefore believers are willed, to *Rejoyce alway and evermore.* So, 1 Thess. 5. *Rejoyce evermore,* and Philip. 4. 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoyce ;* which he so much presses on them because (as it's like) he knew, that they were given to walk droopingly and heavily, which did not so become the Gospel, as rejoycing in God, singing and making melody in their hearts to him, Cheering themselves in him ; and *delighting themselves in the Almighty.* A Tenth is, Spiritual contentment, a contented conversation is a *Conversation becoming the Gospel : Be careful for nothing* (saith the Apostle Philip. 4. 6. ) *But in every thing let your requests be made known unto God by Prayer and Supplication with Thanks giving,* and then follows downward a little, *I have learned, in every State or case to be content : I know how to suffer want, and how to abound, &c.* This conversation was very becoming the Gospel ; he proposes himself as a pattern herein to them : There are many professors of Religion, who cannot have, but they are vain ; and when they want, they are anxious and discouraged ; It's hard to carry the Cup even : But a Gospel-Conversation is equall, sober and composed, and not much up with having, nor much down with want, nor is it easily outwitted and non-plussed by the vicissitudes



vicissitudes of those externall things. An *Eleventh* is, Watchfulness; a Gospel-Conversation is a watchfull conversation, and never much Surprised or moved: or thus, watching (especially over the heart) joyned with Prayer, is a peculiar duty, that a walk becoming the Gospel calls for, that we be not found like the slothful servant, when his Lord cometh; This is a duty well becoming us who live under the Gospel, because we have readily stronger Corruptions, and are at least under more temptations, then those who lived under the Law. A *Twelfth* is, much Self-examination or self-searching because of much corruption in us, and much guilt lying on us, is a duty which the Gospel calls for; that we may see what comes of it; how it is mortified and done away; and there being many Promises in our offer, we should see what acception they get, and how they are embraced, there is hazard of mistaking our Spirituall state, &c. All which calls us to be much in this duty, *Examine your selves prove your own selves*, as says the Apostle, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *13ly. The making of our calling and election sure* becomes the Gospel; when we are hovering, and at an uncertainty as to our soules estate, we are not only to try it, but to endeavour to put it out of question; *I write these things to you* (says John, 1 Joh. 5. 13.) *That Believe; that ye may know that ye have eternal life*, ye would not only believe, but study to know that ye believe, that ye may comfort your selves in it; and it is a piece of a conversation and walk unbecoming the Gospel, to hang loose, in suspense, and at an uncertainty, in that greatest and gravest business. *14ly. Trusting in God*, becomes the Gospel, and unbelief and distrust of God is unbecoming the Gospel; *Said I not unto thee*; (saith the Lord to Martha John 11.) *That if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory*

glory of God? To have a gracious offer from God, and to scare at it, as if he were not in earnest, is very unbecoming the Gospel; when ever he Pipeth, it becomes us well to dance; and to Believe and Credit him, when he speaks fair and comfortably. 15ly. A Gospel-Conversation takes in and calls for, not only Holiness, but a shining exemplary Holiness, Holiness with a divine Lustre and splendor on it; meerly legal holiness is dim and dark; and hath litle or no luster; Therefore Believers are called *Children of the light and of the day*; and they are said to *shine as lights, in the midst of a crooked Generation*: it is not only a Conversation not spotted, or that is something wellfavoured; but such a Conversation, that is well lynd (to speak so) within, with the imputed righteousness of Christ, and much inherent Grace and Holiness, and with outward self-denied, visible Splendor and glory; *Let your light* (saith the Lord, *Math. 5.*) *So shine before men, &c.* Even as the glory of his body, when he was transfigured on the Mount, made his Clothes to shine; So there is something of Grace within, that makes the external actions and carriage of Believers to shine: and words that will be very tasteless and sapless from others, though for the matter good, will have another sort of relish and weight from them; and Prayer from their mouth will have another sort of refreshful sweetness. 16ly. A Gospel conversation takes in and calls for much Joy in affliction and tribulation; *We rejoyce in tribulation*, saith the Apostle; It will make the Christian *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods*, as they did, *Heb. 10. 34.* It will make men come from the presence of Councils rejoycing, that they are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, as it did the Apostles, *Acts 5. last.* My brethren (sayes James) *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers*



*divers temptations*, or tribulations: It makes pleasant and heartsome bearing of Crosses from God, and of injuries from men; It makes the Christian stoop humbly and very low to these; It will not suffer him to render evil for evil, but will put him to do good for evil, and it makes him do it on a Gospel-ground and account; because Christ frankly forgave the Christian *ten thousand Talents* of his debt: he is ready to forgive, an hundred pence of petty and inconsiderable injuries done against him. 17<sup>ly</sup>. A Gospel-conversation is a sweet, quiet, peaceable, well humoured Conversation, it makes men and women good to live with, It hath much love and pity to them that are without, it's a good neighbour, it's a great friend to unity and a great enemy to division: it presses hard *after standing fast in on Spirit..* 18<sup>ly</sup>. A Gospel-conversation implies a settled, fixed condition, that is not fleeting and wavering: It suffers not Christians to be one thing to day and another thing to morrow, very unbecoming the Gospel: a Gospel-conversation will not suffer a man to be a temporizer, or one that cometh and goeth with every turn of the tyde, to be of any Party that is upmost: but puts to *stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free*: the Believers heart is fixed, and his conversation is stable, when it is, as it becometh the Gospel. 19<sup>ly</sup>. It's a bold Conversation, that will scare at no tryal for Christ, but will hazard and venture far, ere it expose the Gospel to contempt and reproach; Therefore it is said, *Philip. 1. In nothing being terrified by your adversaries*: It is very loth to do or to forbear any thing, that may make the Gospel to be evil spoken of. 20<sup>ly</sup>. It is a Spiritual conversation, or a walking in the Spirit, as the word is, *Gal. 5. Walk in the spirit* (saith the Apostle) *And ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*, and Vers. 25. *If we live*

*live in the Spirit let us walk in the Spirit*: It makes us to pray in the Spirit, to praise in the Spirit: and by assistance of the Spirit, it puts upon endeavours to do every thing that is called for. 2<sup>ly</sup>. A Gospel conversation is a wrestling and fighting conversation, striving and warring against temptations without, and a body of death within: a lazie secure, whole-hearted conversation, when a person is lying by, and is not setting himself against, nor purifying himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, but at truce with corruption, is not sure, becoming the Gospel: Hence the Apostle, *Rom. 7.* hath such a combate with the remainder of indwelling corruption, Sometimes complaining of: sometimes **Protesting** against it, and sometimes bitterly bemoaning and crying out under its captivating power: There being in the Believer two contrary parties, one of Grace and another of corrupt nature, which are contrary one to another, as it is, *Gal. 5. 17.* A Believer in a Gospel Conversation is like *Jacobs* and *Esaus* Strugling in the womb: It is for this cause that, *Ephes. 6.* All the pieces of the Spirituall armour are particularly described, and Christians, as Christs souldiers, commanded to put them on: and to have a Gospel-conversation is to be improving all the pieces of that compleat Armour of God aright, to their several ends.

These are things ( and such others ) that are particularly called for in a Gospel-walk and conversation: and if we would take a little view of them all together, and gather the meaning of this *use of Instruction*, from the exhortation, *Let your conversation be, as it becometh the Gospel of Christ*: the Sum of it may be briefly given in these *Four*, 1. To be exactly studying Holiness. 2. To be denyed to our Holiness, as *Paul* was *Philip*. 3. To be especially taken up with those particular duties,



duties, of living by Faith, of exercising Repentance, of aiming at and closely pursuing after Communion with God in Christ Jesus; ( which is, though a much abused duty and unworthily prostituted in the mouths of many, a most precious both duty and priviledge, ) exercising Hope, Self-denyall, &c: So that we may be in case warrantably to say with the Apostle, *1 John 1. 4. Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.* 4. To be much in the Exercise of all these, heartsomely and chearfully, and to be comforted and refreshed in doing duty, and yet denyed to all our doing: A Christian, having a suitable Conversation to the Gospel, Sees his ills and is humbled, observes Gods goodness and Comforts himself, and blesses God heartily for his goodness in respect of both, and because there is hope of an outgate from all his evils, and a day coming, when he shall be finally and fully Redeemed from all his iniquities.

The *Second Use* Leads us to *Regrate and Expostulat* with hearers and Professors of the Gospel, of this time; Though this be the thing and the *only* thing that they are called to, yet if we should go through and view the Conversation of the most part; O! how very unsuitable and unbecoming is it to the Gospel, even so very unsuitable, that if our hearts were tender, they would break and bleed within us to behold it; but Alace! it is a part of our unsuitableness, that we cannot suitably lament it: Little zeal for God, and sorrow for what dishonours him and reflects on the Profession of his Name, are much gone from this generation: Oh! whither shall we go, into the City or Countrey, to find a Conversation becoming the Gospel? We cannot be without some conviction, that we ought to be zealous  
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for the glory of God, and serious in the study of Holiness in all manner of Conversation, that the Gospel be not reproached and blasphemed: if we be so, and if such a Conversation be a duty and a very reasonable duty; how comes it to be so little minded and made conscience of? If we profess Christ to be our Husband and head, our Captain and leader, ought we not to be like him, and follow him? I take it for granted, that this will be generally assented to, as being very just and Reasonable; and yet without accomplishing a very diligent search into our own way, may we not find at the first view much, very Lamentably much unsuitableness in our walk to the Gospel? Need we descend to particulars? is not our unsuitableness obvious, palpable and undeniable? Let me but ask our selves a few questions: are we making suitable use of the promises and often meditating on them? Are we taken up with delighting our selves in God, and in the great and excellent things contained in the promises? Do we study to be like them, and suitably to improve them! Do we study to have those poor performances of duty that we go about, so qualified as the Gospel calls for? the lifelessness and whole heartedness, that manifestly discover themselves, in our very hearing of these things, declare much what we are; your Ministers are some way perplexed and puzzled how to deal with you: and know not well whether to speak or to be silent, whether to pipe or to mourn; what suitableness is there to the Gospel, when the conversation of many is so spotted? So far, Alas! are we from shining, that we are rather like blind lanterns without light. I shall only for whetting an edge on this sad reprove and expostulation, instance in a few of these Particulars touched on before, as to our unsuitableness to the Gospel. I. Do we live by faith?



faith? Alace! is there such a life as this known by most of us? we are readily either living securely, carelessly and unconcernedly, without troubling our selves with such matters: or else on the other hand we give way to unbelief and will hardly admit of any thing, that may settle and make us foot a stand: we are found often running from one extremity to another, we are either carnally vain, light and frothy, or we are anxious, heartless and dejected, and are very seldome found steering a straight course betwixt extremes and stemming the port.

2. We may instance it in the exercise of Repentance, which well becomes the Gospel: Our Lord Christ, *John the Baptist* and the Apostles preached it, and it is commended to all: It is an exercise very suitable and proper for sinners, and more especially for such sinners, as have had many offers of Grace, and have much slighted them: but where is it? Ah! where is it? Converts are rare in these dayes, and among Converts the kindly exercise of Repentance is rare: we are generally as whole-hearted, as if we were living under the Covenant, where there is no promise of pardon to a penitent sinner: I mean not every sort of repentance, for there is a worldly sorrow that works death, there is a legal Repentance arising mainly, if not only from the fear of punishment: But I mean of serious and hearty Gospel-repentance arising from the consideration of Gods holiness, and of his Mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, that is accompanied with holy zeal, fear, indignation and revenge, as it is described, *2 Cor. 7.* 3. Where is self-denyall? Is not that a rare thing? Many of us cannot bear a word reflecting on *self*, neither can we quit a word once uttered by us (though it may be somewhat rashly and unadvisedly) wherein *self* is Concerned, but will needs maintain and defend it: O! what reeling and whirling about

about with the time is there among us? What hard pursuing after and even chasing of self-interests and designs? 4. Where is spirituall joy and rejoicing in the Lord? who delight themselves in the Almighty? who bless themselves on earth, in the God of truth? Who do really and humbly boast in Him all the day-long? who bless themselves in, and think themselves well come to, with Precious Jesus Christ as their Mediator and Redeemer, as their Lord, head, and Husband? who rejoyce and glory in the midst of tribulation in the hope of the glory of God? joy in externall things is much withered away from us, and it is just with God that it should be so, since we live so great strangers to the joy of the Lord, *which is our strength*; upon but a very overly tryall, we will easily discover that there is amongst us none, or but very little spirituall joy in God; I mean not only, nor so much of sensible joy, as of our litle active stirring up of our selves to give obedience to that Command concerning *rejoycing in God alway and evermore*. May I not conclude then, that there is great ground of expostulation with us all, both believers and others, who may be convinced, that this lyeth indispenibly on them, even to have a conversation as it becomes the Gospel of Christ? Ah! how litle conscience is made of it: O! mourn for and Lament our short comings, as to this: and fall to the work, fall about it more then ever, as your main business, to have a conversation becoming the Gospel: many already are a reproach and a shame to the Gospel, (and it will disclaim them) and who shall live to see it, a great many moe will be so; Alace! few or none of us all have a Conversation as becomes the Gospel, which is a Lamentation and should be for a Lamentation.



The *Third Use* is, of *Exhortation*, that seeing such a conversation is so much, and with such speciality called for, and yet so little seriously endeavoured by most; let me turn over to you the Apostle's exhortation to the *Philippians*: if ye would know how to behave at home and abroad, in the duties of Worship, and in the duties of your particular callings, stations and relations, even in all Commanded Duties; then, *Only let your Conversation be, as it becomes the Gospel of Christ*: And beware of doing any thing that is unbecoming the Gospel: or that may give ground to speak any ill of it; beware of letting the precious Promises ly by you unimproved; but study to be like them: O study Holiness in all manner of Conversation; which is, not only and simply to be Holy or to have Holiness, but a Holiness influenced by the Gospel-promises in Christ, believingly improved, as the Apostle exhorts, 2 Cor. 7. 1. Not only to be externally holy, but to be in the exercise of the graces of the Spirit within; to cleanse from all filthiness of the Spirit, as well as of the flesh, especially to purify the heart the fountain of Pollution, even to study to be pure as he is pure, to aime at Holiness in the strength of Christ, in the largest extent and in the Highest pitch, and yet to be denied to it and all vain conceit of it, even to account it but loss, in the point of Justification before God; to be in the Practice of all the duties of Religion Sweetly, Pleasantly, Heartily and cheerfully, walking under all sorts of lots with a Gospel contentedness: This, O! this would be a conversation worthy of, and becoming the Gospel, nay it would make a little Heaven on earth. And we desire to to be as pressing and peremptory in calling for this from you, as ever we urgently pressed you by any call or invitation to receive the offer of the Gospel and of Christ therein;

therein; and if we were to speak to you all, O Men and women, one by one, by name and Surname, this would be our Exhortation to you; *Only let your Conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ.*

We come now, (as we promised) to press this on you by some few *Considerations*: And *First* Consider the authority that enjoins it and lays it on you; and if ye trust him, and expect the accomplishment of any promise of the Gospel from him, then take this as proceeding from the same Authority; presume not under the pain of Gods displeasure, and of cheating your own souls to their ruine, to take or meddle with the promise, if ye mind not sincerely to study a suitableness in your conversation to the Gospel. 2. Consider, not only the reasonableness of the thing, but also the sweet easiness of it; for taking it in a Gospel sence, it's an easy yoke and a light burden: and it's withall very suitable and congruous to all professors of the Gospel: ought not a Minister to be like his calling, a Merchant to be like his calling, a Tradesman to be like his trade and calling? ought not also a Christian to be like his Christian calling, like the Gospel which he professeth? 3. Consider the ties and obligations, that all who profess to have received the Gospel, are under: are ye not oblidge to such a Conversation, by your Baptismal Vow? which obligation, though many of you forget, yet God will require it, Think ye that ye are free to live as ye list, to live like the Gospel or not, or to take one Piece of a Gospel walk, and leave another? Ye are Professedly resigned to God in Baptisme, and are by it oblidge to live every way as it becometh the Gospel; and ye must either on the matter renounce your Baptisme and deny Christ, and so deal treacherously with him, or ye must make it your business to live like the Gospel. 4. Consider,



sider, that this Gospel will be the rule whereby ye shall be judged, whether ye have indeed received the Mediator, The promises and priviledges, the duties and directions, and the graces of it, and improved them or not; in the day (saith the Apostle, Rom. 2.) *That God shall judge the secrets of hearts by my Gospel*: If ye would have boldness when death and Judgement come, endeavour a conversation becoming this Gospel: though your conversation were very much becoming the law (as it is impossible now without Gospel grace) yet will not that satisfie the Judge; for ye will be Judged both by the law and Gospel. 5. Consider, that though the Lord had required many hard things of you; you would most certainly have been obliged to have performed them; and now when he requires only this, ought ye not so much the more to aim at it, and endeavour it? Otherwise ye bring up an ill report on this Gospel, as if it were an unsupportable heavy burden, and most uneasy yoke; for which ye must answer at your peril; consider the dreadful doom and sentence of the slothful Servant, Who said, *He is a hard Master*. 6. Consider the great prejudice that a walk unbecoming the Gospel hath with it; I cannot easily, nay not at all to the full, tell you the prejudice it will bring to you; Only this I will say, that it had been better for you, that ye had never heard the Gospel; It had been better that ye never had been piped to by the Gospel, and that ye had never heard any of its sweetest musick-springs, if (to follow the Lords own similitude so far) ye endeavour not to keep all the measures thereof in your dancing, after it, in your walking conforme to it: Tell me, if we may be in earnest with you: what if ye were called even now, or before night to give an account of your improving of and profiting by the Gospel, whereof ye have

have so very much, and from which ye have been so often piped unto, how utterly unanswerable would many of you be found to be? your trifling way of walking alone and in your families, your neglecting of Prayer in them, with the chiding and bitterness betwixt husbands and wives, and with and amongst servants; your omitting to instruct children and Servants in the principles of Religion; your tipling and mis-spending your time, declare sufficiently what your Conversation is. If any of you shall say, the conversation that you press, is a harder work and a more difficult taske then we can win at; Is it any thing else, then what the Holy Ghost by the Apostle presseth on all the bearers of the Gospel? O! take heed of branding a walk becoming the Gospel with so black a note, as if it were an unsupportable yoke of intolerable hard bondage, lest it be said to you, *evil and slothfull Servants, &c.* if ye had been Serious and diligent in making use of the Gospel in a Gospel way, by improving Christ and the Promises, this work would have gone better with you, and ye had been in much better case then ye are in now: If ye had been more in the practise of Gospel duties and in the exercise of Gospel-graces in secre, your visible conversation might and would have been much more as it becometh the Gospel.

As for you that have Communicat, there is a peculiar tye upon you, you have renewed your Covenant with God: and is there any covenanting with God but it hath this in it, That if there be thereafter a falling back such back sliders come under the guilt of treacherous dealing with him? Let me, for a conclusion of this Discourse, say these few things to you; *First*, Is it suitable, think ye, to fast the one day for your not walking as it becometh the Gospel, and to take unjust liberty to your selves



selves the next day? on a fast day to spue out your foul and abominable sins, and to return with the dog to the vomit in a few dayes thereafter? will ye be so unsuitable to your professions and confessions? beware of that, for the Lords sake: better ye had never fasted nor confessed, then thus to mock the Lord. 2. Many of you have been at the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and in it ye have professed that ye have taken Christ for your husband, which implies the tye and obligation of a dutiful wife: what, I pray, is That, but to have a *Conversation as becomes the Gospel*, and to walk worthy of the *Vocation wherewith ye are called*? As the Apostle Exhorts, *Ephes. 4. 1.* And is there any straiter bond on earth whereby men can be bound? If, after thus Covenanting with Christ, ye shall foully fail or fall back, will it not exceedingly aggrege your guilt? 3. Are there not of you who have come under some private engagements to the Lord? I take it for granted, if ye have not been scorning God in your humiliation, and in your Communicating: I take it ( I say ) for granted, that severals of you have come under particular and personall engagements to God: If so, ye would beware of loosing those tyes, and of violating those so Solemn engagements: and the rather, that it is to be feared, if ye keep not promise to God now, ye may never get a Communion again to renew it. 4. I would have some of you remembering of those particular obligations ye came under, and promises that you made to us, when you received your tokens, to amend those faults whereof ye were well known to be guilty: most certainly those Promises, especially so explicitly made, will bear witness against you, if those evils be continued in, or relapsed into: and we shall bear witness for Christ against you, if ye shall not be answerable to your engagements

ments: for the Lords sake, put us not to it.

Essay in good earnest and set about the Study of this Gospel-becoming Conversation: I shall forbear to speak of encouragements to this. It will be one good encouragement, to consider seriously, that it is a walk becoming the Gospel and Christ in it: that it hath such promises made to it: and such a suretie for every promise: that the certification of the Law is not at it: that ye have pardon of sin promised to you on your Repentance: and furniture at hand for every thing called for from you. Take it in short, what ever your calling, station or relation be: *Only let your Conversation be, as becometh the Gospel of Christ*; and remember the ties and obligations that ye are under, whether more general or more Particular, Otherwise they shall be remembered, to, and against you. Now the Lord himself enable you by His al-sufficient Grace, to suit all your obligations, to pay all your Vowes, and to make all your honest resolutions Practicable, relating to this Conversation becoming the Gospel of CHRIST.

## A very Heavenly S E R M O N

*Preached, if not after the Communion, yet very pertinent for such an occasion; however it is subjoined to the immediately preceeding, because of the affinity of purposes.*

*On Philip. 3. 20. For our Conversation is in Heaven.*

**T**HE Life and work of a Christian is a far other thing, then, for the most part, it is taken to be  
and



and, no question, were we often thinking on, and studying the qualifications and extent of a Christian conversation, to which believers are called; we would walk with stopped mouths in the deep sense of our great short-coming; and there would not be such delusion under the conceit of self-righteousness; But the ignorance of this makes carnall men think themselves to be something; and makes even believers themselves, that they walk not so humbly, nor press so seriously towards the mark, neither do they Propose to themselves, as they ought, a just and perfect pattern to follow.

Amongst other qualifications of a Christian-walk and conversation, This is one and a very considerable one; that *our Conversation should be in Heaven*: A thing we fear the most part of the Christians of this age scarcely believe, much less endeavour, that they should live with their hearts above in Heaven; in the lively expectation of the Saviours coming, That they should converse in Heaven among the spirits of just men made perfect, before they come thither.

The Scope of these words is plain. The Apostle *Paul* hath to do with the Christian *Philippians*, who were much tempted, and no doubt, in some hazard to be led aside both from the faith, and from the Practise of Religion: And the way that he takes to keep them right as to both, is by proposing His own example to them; as if he had said, ye will readily think, that I should be well acquainted with the way to Heaven: Now the way that I take  
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for my Justification Before God, is not to seek after Righteousness by the works of the Law, but to be found in Christ covered with his righteousness taken hold of by Faith: And if ye would know what I do in reference to Sanctification, this is it, *I forget those things that are behind, and reach forth unto those things that are before, pressing towards the Mark for the Prize*; being constantly as it were on the spur, that I may attain that which I have not as yet come at, even that perfection of Holiness, *that accompanies the resurrection from the dead*: And having laid this before them, as a fair copy and pattern; He improves it, by exhorting them thus, *Brethren be ye followers together of me*; take the way, that I take, both in the matter of Faith and of Practice; And he gives two reasons why he would have them to do so; The *First* whereof is taken from the danger that was in following those false teachers, *Vers. 18. 19. Many of whom walk so, as they are Enemies to the Cross of Christ*; That is, enemies to the doctrine of faith in Christ, and to the exercise of it on him, and to the Doctrine of his Cross, and also to a truly spiritual walk, *Whose end is destruction, and whose God is their Belly*. The *Second Reason* is subjoyned in the *Text*, drawn from the great advantage, which they should have by following him, *For* (saith He) *Our conversation is in Heaven*: This is the spiritual, Heavenly and divine walk, wherein he holds forth himself, and his fellow-Apostles as a pattern to be imitated by them, and so teacheth them their duty; *We are not* (as if he had said) *like*



like those false teachers; *But our Conversation is in Heaven*, Therefore follow us; and he gives an instance of this in the latter part of the *Vers*, *From whence* (saith he) *We look for the Saviour*: He is like a person on the Watch tower, that is looking and longing for the coming of a friend; Plainly insinuating thereby, that he looks not for much satisfaction in this world, but was earnestly longing for and in continuall expectation of Christs coming; to which all his hope and expectation of compleat happiness, and of full satisfaction to his soul, was closely confined.

So then the great thing that he aims at here, is to commend a heavenly conversation, to these Christian *Philippians*, & to all that should hear the Gospel, and this excellent piece of it amongst the rest.

There are only *Two* things shortly to be cleared, before we proceed further; The *First* is, What is meant by *Conversation* here; And the reason of the question is, because the word is so very significant in the Original, that hardly can we get a word in our language to express it by to the life; It's taken from that which signifies a Town-ship, corporation-ship (to speak so) or Burges-ship; and it implies these *two* things; *First*, a title to such and such priviledges; as those who were *Romans* or born Citizens of *Rome*, & whoever were made Burges-ship of it; had such and such Priviledges attending their Burges-ship. The *Second* is a suitable *life* and peculiar manner of living and carrying according to the Lawes of that City; as it is often said in

the book of the *Acts of the Apostles*, *After the manner of the Romans* : who had their own lawes, customs, and ulages : and being applied here in a Spiritual sense, it supposes. 1. A joint interest with the saints, ( or being *Fellow Citizens with the Saints* : As it is *Ephes. 2. 19.* ) Who are all Burgeses of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, though some of them be, as it were, in the Suburbs and lower Town, and some in the Higher ; yet all here below have the same Master and Father with them who are above in Heaven. 2. It supposeth a way, walk, and conversation like Heaven, to be peculiarly indued with a nature, inclinations, desires, designs, and qualifications suitable to heaven : We take it here, especially in the latter sense : because *Paul* proposeth himself as a pattern to them to imitat ; and it holds his suitableness to Heaven.

The *Second* thing to be cleared a litle is, what it is to have a conversation in Heaven ? I *Answer*, these *two* are in effect one and the same, to have a conversation in heaven, and to be Heavenly in our conversation : it's even to have a conversation like that which Christians hope to have in Heaven, and such as are bounden, and on their way thitherward, should have : This is a generall hint of what a Heavenly Conversation, or a Conversation in Heaven is : and because, in prosecuting the Doctrines to be deduced from the words, we will have occasion to explain it More Particularly, we shall say no more of it now.

The *Doctrines* that arise from the words, are especially



especially these *Four*: The first whereof is, that *There is a sort of Heavenliness, in the Conversation of Christians, that should be studied by them all without exception, and that lyeth on them all as their duty.*

The *Second* is, that, *This Heavenliness of Conversation is in a great measure through Grace attainable: for Paul and other believers attained it; which is not so to be understood, as if there were an universall suitableness; or a suitableness in all things, in sojourning Saints, to Glorified Saints in Heaven; for in Heaven they do not eat nor drink, neither are they married nor given in Marriage: But it's to be understood of a suitableness in respect of qualification, conformity and likeness; in so far as is incumbent to sojourners who are walking thither-ward.*

The *Third* is, That, *It is a peculiar and contradistinguishing mark of a serious and suitably exercised Christian, from all other men in the world: That his conversation is in Heaven, while that of others is not.*

The *Fourth* is, That, *It's not an ordinary and common, but a rare thing among Professed Christians, to have a Conversation in Heaven; Many (sayes the Apostle) Walk, of whom I have told you, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies to the Cross of Christ: But I and some few others with me have our Conversation in Heaven: and the many that he speaks of here, we take to be those, of whom he speaks in the First Chapter, who preached Christ, but out of envy, and pressed Holiness, it is like with more then ordinary fervour, being zealous of the Law, and seeking to mix the righteousness of it with the Righteousness of Christ in the point of Justification: yet they had not their Conversation in Heaven, as he and some others had.*

We shall not prosecute these *Doctrines* distinctly:

seeing this is the scope of them all, even to hold forth and commend the Necessity and excellency of a Heavenly conversation: which we shall *first* clear. 2. Confirm: and then. 3. We shall speak to the Use of it.

*First* Then, for Clearing what a Heavenly Conversation is, ye would consider, that the Apostle speaks of his owne and of some few other Godly persons their conversation, in opposition to those many mentioned by him before: And it imports or implies these *Four*. *First* it's to have Heaven proposed to our selves as our great Scope and designe, next to the glory of God; even as, to have an earthly Conversation, is to mind earthly things, to have a bentness of spirit towards them, and to be wholly or Mostly taken up about the things of the World: So to be Heavenly in our Conversation, is to have the mind taken up about Heaven, Prizing, affecting and seeking after Heaven and Heavenly things, as the word is, Col. 3. 1. *Seek after, or set your affections on those things that are above.* Secondly, As it imports, Prizing and affecting of Heaven and of Heavenly things, so it imports the taking of that way that leads to the end: and so it is, to be in the use of all means and duties that lead to Heaven, seek (saith the Apostle, in that Col. 3. 1.) *Those things that are above: Set your affections on things above, not on things beneath, or on the earth:* To hold forth the earnestness and ardency of affections that Christians ought to have towards things heavenly: and how very much they should be with Holy care and solicitude, busied in the use of all means, and in the Practice of all duties, for the furthering and promoting of an Heavenly designe: even as worldly men are taken up and exercised with carking cares, leaving (as it were) no stone unmoved to promote and compass their earthly designes. *Thirdly*, It imports the  
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having of our Conversation *like* heaven, to be walking like those that are in Heaven: not to be conformed to the World, or like the men of the world, but to be like Angels and Glorified Saints in Heaven, according to our Capacitie: as we are taught to pray, in the Lords Prayer, *They will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven*: It's to have a native and kindly suitableness and proportionableness to them that are glorified in Heaven. *Fourthly*, It imports this, that we should be often in Heaven as to our thoughts and affections, as to our desires and delights: Though we be living on the earth: that we should have as it were, more then our one half in heaven: as *David* hath it *Psal. 25. 1. Unto thee O Lord, do I lift up my soul*: or as the Word is, *2 Cor. 5. Though we be absent in the Body, that yet we may be some way present in our Spirits with the Lord*; that we should make frequent visits to Heaven; that we should have much to do there, have much Traffique, commerce, correspondence and intercourse in and with Heaven; that (in a word) we should converse more where we love, then where we live: which is held forth and expressed in the Scripture, by *walking with God*, by *having fellowship with him*, by *following hard after him*, and the like: a suitableness to and a converse in Heaven are mainly meant here.

As for the *Second* thing proposed, *viz. The Confirmation* of this, that a Christian should study this Heavenliness of Conversation; the Argument is clear and pressing from *Verf. 17*. Where the Apostle exhorts the *Philippians* to be followers of him, and here he tells them that *his Conversation is in Heaven*: and if his Conversation was in Heaven, then certainly it was their duty and is ours, to have our Conversation in Heaven; for he proposeth himself as our pattern in this, and we have

it, from the Spirit of God, by him pressed on us as our duty, to imitat him in this thing; It is not so singular a practice; as to be peculiarized, Monopoliz'd and engrossed to him alone; but such as was common to him, and other serious Christians according to their measure; Therefore he says not, *My Conversation*, but *Our Conversation*; as if he had said, it's mine and the Conversation of others, and of all that follow me; and I would have you in this to follow me and none other that doth not walk as I do. If it be needfull further to confirme it, ye may take this one reason, which hath several arguments in the bosom of it; A Christians Conversation should be Heavenly, because, *all that a Christian hath, is from and in Heaven, and is some way Heavenly*; as will manifestly appear, if ye look, first to a Christians nature, it's from Heaven; He is Partaker of the Divine Nature, He is born of God, He is of the new Jerusalem, his Father is Heavenly, as he is taught to pray; *Our Father which art in Heaven, Or our Heavenly Father*; to point out, that as we have born the Image of the earthly, so must we bear the Image of the Heavenly, as it is. 1 Cor. 15. 49. Where is the elder Brother? Is he not in the Heavenly places? As the Apostle tells us Ephes. 2. 6. His Treasure is in Heaven; His hope is in Heaven; Heaven is the City, the Mansion, the rest whither He is travelling, or if Secondly, ye consider the Believers calling and his obligation: Thereby he is partaker of the Heavenly calling: (as it is Heb. 2. 1.) Separated from the rest of the world, and therefore ought not to live as the world doth; He hath a Heavenly law to walk by: he hath Heavenly promises, to feed and live upon, and to comfort himself in; his happiness is Heavenly; and all the Duties that he is called to are so; of which this is the substance and sum, even



to glorifie God, and to seek to enjoy him, and so to shine in his Conversation, as others may be provoked to glorifie God: are not his prayers and praises Heavenly? and can a believer possibly go aright about those, and not be Heavenly? to be *Translated from darkness to light*, to be a *partaker of the Sanctifying spirit of God*, to be a *new Creature*, to have the *spirit of Adoption*, to have *boldness of access to God*, to be an *Heir and a joint-Heir with Christ &c.* Are not these Heavenly? Or if *Thirdly*, We look to his company, is it not Heavenly? *We are come* (saith the Apostle *Heb. 12.*) *To God the Judge of all*, to *Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant*, to the *new Jerusalem*, (which taketh in all the Saints in Heaven, & the Saints on earth) to an *innumerable company of Angels*, to the *general assembly of the first born*, &c. to the *Spirits of just men made perfect*. In a word, whatever we look to, whether to the Believers nature, or to his end, or to the rule of his walk, or to the Promises, or to his work and way wherein he is to go; all is Heavenly: is there not an oblidging necessity on the Believer, in respect of all these, to study to be Heavenly in his Conversation? Which is the great thing that the Apostle *Paul* presseth on you; and from these words is clearly pressed on all Christians.

The *uses* are *four*; The *First* whereof serves for *Instruction* and *Infirmation* to all that bear the Name of Christ; know from this, what is the high pitch of Holiness that ye are called to, It is even to be Heavenly in your Conversation; are there not many who have much need to be instructed in this? Who never walked under the Conviction of the necessity of this as a duty; otherwise, were it possible, that the most part of men and women, who are called Christians and profess a hope of Heaven, could or durst live as they do, some in

Prophanity Riotousness and gluttony ; others in meer civility and Morall Honesty ; and others in Formality and Hypocrisie at the best ? Let me ask you in good earnest, are ye not convinced that this is a duty ? or do you think that *Paul* was scorning or complementing, when he exhorts to follow him in this ? Or is it possible that ye can enjoy so many Heavenly priviledges, or be to any purpose performing heavenly duties, except ye be Heavenly in your Conversation ? And if so, Mistake not Christianity, as if when ye are exhorted to be Christians, ye were only bidden not to be prophane ; or only to go about the externall duties of Religion ; or only to have a sort of meerly Moral sincerity, and seriousness in the performing of them ; which are indeed things good in themselves, and we do not, we dare not disallow them, but rather commend them ; but ye are called to more, to much more, and that is to be *Heavenly-minded and to have your Conversation in Heaven*. I know some are so profane, and others are so misbelievingly discouraged, that when they hear such doctrine as this, they will be ready, the one sort to say, *We cannot all be Saints* ; and the other, *Alace ! we cannot be Saints* : but let all such mouths be stopped ; ye are called and oblidge indispensibly to be Saints : and if ye be not Saints here, ye shall never be Saints hereafter : There are also some of so distempered dispositions and humours, that they either put off all or most duties, or at least go very heartlessly about them, because they cannot attain perfection in them ; but it's clear from the Scriptures, that there is a kind of Perfection to be win at here in this life, which is even this Holiness and Heavenly-ness of Conversation : When ye shall be called to a reckoning, God will not ask you so much, whether ye did not Drink drunk, Whore, Swear, Lie, Cheat, Steal,



Steal, or the like, as whether ye were Heavenly in your Conversation? and this is not to be astricted to one, or to some few particular duties; but is the requisite qualification of a Christian in all duties and in all his actions: whether he be Praying, Practising, Hearing, Reading, Buying, Selling, Eating, Drinking, &c. Or whatever He do and be about, he is to be Heavenly in all those.

And if ye *Ask* more particularly, *what that is?* I shall shew you, in what respect a Christian may be said to have and should have his Conversation in Heaven. And *First*; in respect of the inward Holy frame and Divine sett of his heart: he should be Heavenly in that: free from those distemperring Passions, that the men of this world are subjected, nay enslaved unto and hurried with: He should not have his affections dragging on the earth, nor his delights, nor desires taken up with things earthly: but he should be Mortified unto and weaned from all those things: He should not be like unto those who on all occasions are tossed with their humors and with every wind of temptation: but he should be so calme, Composed and sober, settled and fixed in a Heavenly temper of Spirit, that words of reproach may not much trouble him, nor crosses and afflictions much disquiet him: he should have such composure and sedateness of spirit, that he may be much above the levity and unstaydness that the men of the world are under the power of, and he should endeavor to be defecated and purged from those impure mixtures of self-interests, that are regnant in worldly men. *Secondly* in respect of his work, he should and may have his conversation in Heaven, and that is, when he is much in the exercise of those Graces, and in the practise of those duties, that he is to be taken up with in Heaven: to be much in  
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love to God, taken up with delighting in him, much in Communion with God, Holily impatient to want him or to live without his company; to be much in the study and searching out of his perfections: to be studying to have the heart fixed, as it were a pillar in his house and not to go out from him: to be much in admiring and adorning the free grace and love of God: and to be in a Holy manner ravished with the contemplation of those: to be much in the work of Prayer, and much in the work of Praise, saying, *Worthy is the Lamb to receive Glory, Honour, Dominion &c.* Joining with the four beasts and four and twenty Elders; saying, *Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*: to be much in prizing and valuing of God, in setting out and commending him: to be in all duties willing and cheerfull, doing Gods will cheerfully and with alacrity: to be much in longing for the Sabbath to converse more closely with him: longing often for privacie and retirement to pour out the heart before him: and to do all this with Holy coveting to do it better, praying *that his will may be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven.* Thirdly, A believer may be said to have his Conversation, and you are called to have yours in Heaven, in respect of a Heavenly walk, and as having a heavenly impresse on all your Conversation: to be walking as it were in Heaven, and as if *Holiness to the Lord* were written on your foreheads: which being very comprehensive takes in these, First to have the heart fixed in meditating on God and his law, on Spirituall and Heavenly things, to have a sublime and divine strain of mind, not debasing it self to pursue vanities; but kept in a close and constant pursuit after Communion with God and conformity to him; to be in case to say with *David, Psal. 139. When I awake I am still with thee*: Labouring to leave the heart  
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and mind in Heaven, when ye ly down, and seeking to find it there, when ye arise. 2. To have your affections, love, desires and delights in Heaven, or heavenly. 3. To have your words favouring of Heaven; *Ministering Grace to the hearers*; endeavouring to have your words weighty and grave in the commendation of God and his Grace. 4. To have your hearing of the word, and your praying, carrying much of a heavenly stamp and impression on them; hearing, as if God were speaking to you Immediately from heaven, and praying; as if ye were even before his Throne. 5. In your more common and ordinary Conversation, as in your Eating and Drinking, in your recreating, and in following your lawful callings and employments, even the very coursest and lowest of them, to propose to your selves another end, then the men of the world do, making that your main end to *Glorifie God*; and to have such a heavenly and Divine way of going about these, as may be convincing, edifying and gaining of on-lookers; not to be predominantly influenced by selfish humours, designs or interests, looking only, or mainly, to what may please or profit your selves, but levelling all at the Glory of God, and the edification and good of others, as well as your own. *Fourthly*, We may be said to have our Conversation in Heaven, when we have a Holy commerce and trading (as it were) with Heaven; as a man is said to converse in *France* or *Spain*, when he trades and traffiques there; So, to have converse in Heaven, is Spiritually to traffique there; to have Faith and Hope exercised in and about heaven, to send many prayers and desires to heaven, as so many empty vessels; and to be in the lively and longing expectation of their return full and richly loaden; to make many visits (as I said before) to heaven; and to be in all those, neither  
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seldome, nor transiently and at starts only, but to be frequent and more continuing in them; and though they should sometimes return either with seeming losse, or with very litle gain, yet to keep up the trade and traffique, seeking to make up our losse by a new voyage thither: for the trade is not alwayes (to speak so) alike quick. *Fifthly*, We may be said to converse in heaven, by our abiding (as it were) in heaven; and this is one of the highest steps of a heavenly Conversation. If ye shall ask How it is, that a believer, while on earth, doth or can abide in Heaven? I *Answer* these wayes, or in these respects: 1. By having his heart in heaven, where his treasure is; For (as the Lord sayes) *Where a mans treasure is, there is his heart*: the man (as it were) dwels there, and if at any time he remove a litle, he leaves there his great stock, and his heart as a Factor: so, though the Christian be discoursing, buying, selling, eating, drinking &c. Yet in all these, his heart may and ought some way to be in heaven. 2. To have his Faith in heaven, and, as it were, never to come out of it. 3. To have his love in heaven, folding its two armes about the Lamb and him that sits on the Throne; holily loth to have them loosed from those sweet Soul-solacing and satisfieing embraces. 4. To have his hope in heaven, which is an *Anchor cast within the vail*, and makes the soul safe and sure amidst the greatest tempests of outward trouble, as a ship rideth safely when she hath cast Anchor on firme ground, so that there is no fear she will drive. In a word, these *Four*, The *Heart*, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Love*, being in heaven, we may say that the mans best half and Part is in heaven: his redder stake is loosed, and much of his Tabernacle taken down, and he made in a good measure meet, ready and ripe for his dissolution and for heaven: Thus ye are called and oblidged



oblidged to have your **Conversation in heaven**. *Sixthly*, A Believers conversation may be said to be, and ought to be in heaven, when his contentment, delight and satisfaction are in heaven; when all that he desires, all that he delights in, and on which his soul feeds, and all that he is comforted with, is in heaven, and he hath not a day to do well, nor one comfortable good hour, but that which is given him from heaven: and this is not only to be abiding with, but to be delighting in God: having *the peace of God that passeth understanding, guarding the heart*, and *His love shed abroad therein*: and having all that which entertains his life, coming from heaven: Thus *Col. 3. 3.* It is said, *that our life is hid with Christ in God*: So that the Believer is affected with nothing, feeds upon, and is satisfied with nothing so much as he is with that which comes from heaven: He awakes, he sleeps, he rests there: This is to live in **Heaven**, and to be heavenly in our **Conversation**: And this is it that ye are called and oblidged to: even to have your conversation in heaven in all these forementioned respects: that as ye believers are of another nature, so ye may be of another and more divine Frame of soul in your work and walk, in your thoughts and words, in your outward duties, and in the exercise of inward **Graces**, in your commerce and trading, in your contentment, delight, and satisfaction, to be heavenly in all.

And if any shall here say, This is a very hard task: *I Answer first*, Can it be hard to be in heaven? Nay, it's an ease rather, for *Christ's yoke is easie and his burden is light*: & in as much as our **Conversation** is in heaven we have so much true **Spiritual ease & repose of soul**: & it is what we leave behind in the world, that makes the difficulty to get our **Spirits** scrued up to heaven, and to be kept there: here lyes the difficulty: but the more the  
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heart and the mind be there, we have really the more ease. 2. Will ye shift, deny or decline the duty, because it's difficult and hard? As indeed it is to corrupt nature: Notwithstanding all the difficulty of it, the Apostle *Paul* with his fellows and followers did win to it in a good measure, and we may attain it through Grace, according to our Measure; Is not this the way to heaven which our Lord calleth *Strait*, and which but few find? And yet, if ye would try and make proof of it in good earnest: ye would find it to be not so very strait or unpassable as ye Imagine it to be: It would be found to be waited with such delight, as would much sweeten any hardness in it: and ye would not want an insight in those heavenly mysteries, and the beholding your names written in heaven and in the Lambs book of life, nor one hours feeding upon and being solaced by them, for all the delights of the men of this world: and since it's only hard to corruption, it should be so much the more endeavoured and plyed hard.

The *Second Use* serves for *Tryall*, that we may know who is a Christian indeed and a Thriving Christian; or it may serve rather to be an use of *Discovery* and of *Conviction*; and indeed it may very easily and quickly make discovery of the unsoundness of many, and of the short-coming of all: Need we insist on this? Is it not a truth obvious to all, viz. That Christians are called and obliged to be heavenly in their Conversation? Are not these the Characters of such a Conversation? Nay is there not yet much more requisit in a Christian, even a divineness above what we can express? And if ye be (as ye may be) convinced that this is a truth; then let me in the next place ask you, if your Conversation be such? Put your own consciences to it; enquire at them whether your trade be to Heaven, whether your peace  
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and joy, your delight and satisfaction be there? Would God ye would essay it, and could upon good ground say, that it is so: But Ah! is there any that can say it without some hesitation? Is not the best exceeding defective? Or if many of you shall say, it is so; What then means your carnalness, your prevailing lust, distemp'ring humours and passions? What means your so much pleading for self-interests, this turning (as it were) of the World up-side down for our own particulars? How comes it to pass, that ye who are profane do spend so much of your precious time in Tipling, and trifle away so much of it unprofitably many other wayes? Dare ye say, that ye who walk thus, are indeed followers of the *Apostle Paul*? Or if ye dare not say, that ye are followers of him in his Heavenly Conversation; can ye think or expect to dwell with him in Heaven? O! be not deceived, for God will not be mocked; when ye reflect seriously on your selves and on your way, will ye not find just ground for being ashamed and confounded before God? or is there any of us all, that needs to want an errand to the Throne of Grace, to confess and crave Pardon for our sinfull short-coming in this? I shall only speak a word or two in further prosecution of this Use, to you that are *Stout-hearted* and know no changes, that have alwayes a good opinion and a good word to say of your selves, Who are ready to say, that ye have a good meaning, and to think and say that ye loved God all your dayes; and who at best content your selves with and sit down on a form of Religion, who never studied to die to the world, and never made it your business in good earnest, to Mortifie your lusts, and to be holy in the inward frame of your souls: Is this, think ye, to have your *Conversation in Heaven*? Would ye know then, if ever ye have studied Christianity seriously;

try it by this, *viz.* Whether ye have been heavenly in your conversation; for however ye Judge of your selves, God will most certainly Judge you according to this Rule and qualification of a Christian: It is both sad and strange to think, how it comes to pass, that many of you bear and bolster up your selves with a hope of Heaven, and profess that ye have no doubt but you shall come thither, who yet want and are void of this qualification.

I know such will be ready to Object, Who are they that come this length? To which I shall only Answer, That, as I would be very loth to *quench any smoking flax*, or to *break any bruised reed* (whereof our Lord and Master is very tender) or to cast water of discouragement upon any the least spark or spunk of sincerity, where there is any honest aiming to walk according to this Rule; So, I cannot, I dare not but say to others, in the *first Place*; have ye walked under the conviction of this as a duty incumbent on you? and have ye seriously Proposed it to your selves as your great business in the World, to be sincerely aiming at, and endeavouring after this Conversation in Heaven? or have ye not rather had peace (such as it was) when ye said your prayers morning and evening, though ye did not so much as designe or aime at this throughout the day? And can ye with any shadow of reason think, ye have attained it or can attain it, who never seriously proposed this as a Rule to your selves to walk by, nor never had a Conscience-disquieting-challenge for such neglect and manifest short-coming? 2. What Labour are ye at, what pains take ye to prosecute such a designe and blessed project as this? It's one thing to pray, to be about external duties of Religion, and to be a *Christian in the letter*; and another thing to be in these duties after a heavenly



heavenly manner, and to be a Christian indeed, a *Christian inwardly and in the spirit*, whose praise is not of men but of God; Is it really your honest aime, designe and endeavour (whatever be the attainment) to be as much Heavenly in your conversation, as it is to be civil and formal, or to attend the outward Ordinances? I fear many of you cannot say, it is. 3. What weight lyes on your spirits, for your short coming in this? Ye will (be like) say, we are all short; which is a sad truth, for indeed so we are; but are ye really weighted and grieved for your short-coming in this? Have there been any times taken, to deal purposely with the Lord to remove the earthly mind, and to help to Heavenly-mindedness? Have there been challenges and any measure of serious heart-exercise, because of the want of a heavenly mind? and that not only sometimes at the hearing of a Sermon, or in time of sickness, or when under some other trouble; but in your more constant and habituell walk? Is it one of the great things for which ye blame and find fault with your selves before God? And though your outside and visible Conversation be blameless: yet while you look on the carnalness and earthliness of your mind, and on the want of this Divine and heavenly frame of soul, it makes you hang the head, marres your boldness, and (as it were) layes your feathers: because, do what ye can, your heart will not abide in heaven: If it be thus, It's a token for good, and some ground of peace: but O! How rare is this? many of you, be like, have often overly prayed, *Forgive us our sins*; who never took with, nor prayed for the Pardon of this sin: but have lyen down at night and risen up in the morning, having your hearts plunged and pudled in the world, without once minding heaven in earnest, and yet have never been challenged for it: O sad state!

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The *Third Use* Serves to *Reprove* and *Expostulat* for this unworthy carriage ; for having either nothing at all, or but very litle of a *Conversation in Heaven* : We take it for granted, that many of us are far from it, and that all of us are litle in it ; but very few even of the best are dayly and constantly *Conversing in Heaven* ; Alace ! it's but now and then with many sad interruptions. For quickning this reproof and *expostulation* a litle, let me propose these few *Queries* to you ; and in the *First place*, do ye not know that the neglect of this is a sin and the breach of a *Command* ; *Be ye followers of me* ? 2. Is not this an excellent duty and royall priviledge , to be admitted to converse in Heaven ? And therefore the neglect of it must not only be a sin, but a great sin, even a trampling on the Grace of God , a slighting of heaven and of a most noble priviledge and dignity. 3. Think ye Heaven to be of great worth ; if so , must not conversing in heaven be of much worth ? Will ye never so much as once go to see the house , wherein ye say ye are to dwell ? O ! How unsuitable a thing is it , that those who are but *dayes men* here, should sit down and settle on the earth without minding Heaven, and be so confined within time, as not seriously to mind eternity ? 4. How can ye come before God with confidence and boldness , who do not endeavour thus to walk with him ? Can ye say with Holy boldness ; *Our Father which art in Heaven*, Whose Conversation is not Heavenly ? Can ye pray for Holiness, and say these words, *Thy will be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven*, who never studied to be heavenly in any duty , that ye put hand to ? But 5. And above all, I would ask you, can ye hope to die comfortably , nay can ye hope to die in safety , as to your souls, who know not heaven , nor what is there, nor what is the way to it ? It gives a man  
confidence



confidence and comfort at death, that he hath conversed in heaven in his life-time; such a man hath but little to do, when he comes to die, he knows the way and is not afraid, he knows the company and longs to be with them; he knows the privileges and longs for the full enjoyment of them; he hath little here, his Treasure is above in heaven, and his heart, Faith, Love, and hope are there; his Anchor is cast within the vail, and he would fain be ashore: sure this is the Believers both duty and priviledge; do not think, that it is only called for from some More then ordinary Christians, and who have nothing else to do: the matter is not so, it's most certainly a duty, to which ye are all called that have a mind to land fairly in heaven, when ye come off the troublesome tossing and tempestuous Sea of this world.

Now Therefore in the *Last* room (as the *Fourth Use* of the *Doctrine*) I *Exhort*, *beseech* and *Obtest*, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, all of you that lay any claim to the hope of heaven, that ye would, and more then ever, study to have your Conversation in heaven; **O!** Be followers of *Paul* and of his fellows in this thing: Need we adduce any motives to press this? Is not the duty clear? And is it not a most excellent duty, a most desirable qualification of a Christian walk? Is not heaven Transcendently excellent? And is it not excellent to be heavenly minded, and conversant in heaven? Wherein may we expect to prevail with you, if not in bringing you to heaven? what is the thing that should sweeten the study of holiness to you? Is it not this, even, that by having your conversation in heaven, ye come thither? Those who are now in heaven think it a great motive, and if it be not a motive to you, ye will one day curse your selves that ye Neglected it:  
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studie it therefore in due time : This is the way to be free of the encombrances of an evil World : there is no hazard of this estate its being forfeited or sequestred, there are no Plunderings nor quarterings here, no poverty nor pain, nor any sad evil occurrent here ; O ! what a desirable life is it to be above all those things ? And indeed in so far as your Conversation is heavenly in so far ye are above them, and live the life of Angels.

It's like ye will *Ask*, what are the means or steps by which, we may *win* in and ascend to this heavenliness of Conversation ? which is indeed a very suitable and necessary question, and would God we were serious in proposing of it, and were convinced of the necessity of it : However, let such as would fain be at it, know, *First*, That they must be much mortified, and denyed to Creature-Comforts : therefore *Col. 3.* These two are opposed, *Seek those things which are above, set your affections on things in heaven ; and not on things of the earth :* to go both up and down at once is impossible : if ye would be heavenly in your Conversation, seek to have the world litle and low in your estimation : to be not only free from the sinfull intanglements of it, but to be Mortified to things lawfull : I press you not to negligence in your honest and lawfull callings, far less to lay them aside, but to a heavenly mindedness and holy denyedness in your diligence : Use the things of this world as not abusing them : as not being taken with them, nor glued to them : the minding of earthly things too much clogs and keeps mens hearts, that they do not mount up to heaven : It's impossible, while the heart is surfeited with the cares of this life, that it can thus sore aloft. And therefore, *Secondly*, Those that would be heavenly in their conversation must lay up their treasure in heaven,



heaven, For where the Treasure is, there will the heart be also: were ye under the deep and due conviction of the vanity of earthly things, and of the excellencie of heaven and heavenly things, and laying your reckoning soberly and seriously, that heaven ye must have, it would be much more easie to Scruce up your affections to it: as where mens stock and treasure is, there is their heart: even so, were your great stock and treasure in heaven, your heart would certainly be there: your hope, your love and delight would be there: But your seeking after contentment and satisfaction in earthly vanities, where it cannot be found, keeps your heart out of heaven. Thirdly, Be much in the duty of meditation and contemplation of heavenly things: this is, (as it were) the great wheel and first mover of the Clock, to have the mind heavenly, often conversing in heaven, and often thinking of it, and often recounting the blessed advantages, the glorious and great happiness that are there, even till your meditation of God be made sweet, and till your delight in him, thereby stirred up and strengthened, make a heavenly conversation: for little such meditation makes little heavenly-mindedness; and when the mind is not on heaven, something that's worse comes in the place of it; ye that know the bent and inclination of your own minds to be naturally downward, and how natively (to speak so) it runs on vanities; and how difficult it is to keep it, but amongst two or three sentences, fixed on heavenly things: and how preternatural a motion it is, (as it were) to make it ascend and mount upward, will easily assent to the truth of this; It is an excellent word that David hath Psal. 139. When I awake I am still with thee. Fourthly, We commend this to you (hinted at before) that ye would be much in trading and Trafficking with Heaven; to be often

often and serious in Prayer, frequently sending up desires thither, and bringing thence returns of prayer in great measures of Grace; catching hold of and griping at somewhat above you, whereby ye may be helped up that high and Holy hill; *It transforms into the same Image from Glory to Glory*, to be keeping love to Christ fresh, to have hope as an anchor cast within the vaille; In a word, love to Christ and delight in him, being, as a considerable part, so also the result of Holiness; There must be a study of Holiness in all the Parts of it, of Holiness in all manner of Conversation, and a Heavenly frame aimed at, and endeavoured in all duties, and in all the steps of our walk and conversation, in order to the keeping in, cherishing and increasing of love to, and delight in him; and often thinking on that which helps to it, *viz. Let thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven*; A word often in the mouths of many, but little in their hearts: And O! how lamentably unlike are the practises of many of you to it? We may indeed blush and think shame to speak, and you may think shame to hear of having a Conversation in heaven, there being so little of it amongst us; But we must speak of it and ye must hear it spoken of: since it is a part and a great part of our duty, and will be a part, and a great part of our reckoning: and we lay and leave it upon you from the Lord, to be studied by you: Do not think that ye shall ever have your Conversation in Heaven afterward, who have not your Conversation in Heaven here; many of you that have a fair Profession of Religion, and seem to come near to that harbour of rest and yet never enter into it, are like to a ship that comes, as it were, with up-sails, very near the Port, and is unexpectedly blown back to the Sea again; whereas the Believer who has his Anchor cast on firm  
and



and sure ground within the vail, is enabled to endure  
tossing, being like a tight ship that is able to ride  
out the storme and to stem the Port: His Treasure  
is in Heaven, and there is a sure and indissoluble  
knot cast betwixt Heaven, where his treasure is,  
and his heart. Now from all this judge, what a  
mighty prejudice it is to be earthly minded, and  
to slight this walk with God, and Conversation in  
heaven: and who are they that dare offer or pre-  
sume to come before God the righteous Judge of  
Heaven and Earth, in whose sight the very Heavens  
are not pure, to abide his tryall, who have been  
puddling all their dayes in the world, never once  
seriously and suitably minding a Conversation in  
Heaven? O let the consideration of eternal Hap-  
piness on the one hand, and of Eternal miserie on  
the other, provoke you, and necessitate you, all to  
study in good earnest *to have your conversation in  
Heaven*; and ye believers in Christ and Children  
of light, walk in the light, suitably to your Hea-  
venly Father and to the hope of your Heavenly in-  
heritance. O! be more conversant in Heaven, be-  
fore ye come to it, and where ye shall be by and  
by for evermore.

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A preparation

## A Preparation S E R M O N, for the *Communion*.

On ISAIAH. 55. 1, 2, 3. ----- *I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*

**I**T is hard to conceive or express, whether the things which the Gospel offereth be the most large, or the terms on which they are offered be the most free. There is that, no doubt, in both together, which may make the beholder stay and wonder. Among many excellent offers of the Gospel, that which is here is one very full and free: would to God we could look on it suitably. But Alace! we may fear, that we shall rather leave these sweet words with a vail cast over the Beauty, Splendour and Lustre of them, then lay them forth and unfold them as we ought, and as they call for; we would therefore look to himself whose words they are, and beseech him to explain and make them out to us.

That this Text speaks of the Gospel, of the times of the Gospel, and of Gospel-mercies, we take for granted and have good reason to do so, as on other accounts, so from *Acts* 13. 34. Which clearly holds out to us that these Promises are not to be understood of Temporal things: the *fifth vers.* with all telling us, that the offer of this Grace Promised shall be made to the *Nations*. We



We may take up the Words in thele **Four**: or there is here a Gospel-cryed fair or Market set out in **Four** things: *First* in the Wares, *Wine* and *Milk*, *that which Satisfies* and is good and fatness *vers. 2.* *Soul, life,* and *the sure mercies of David,* *vers. 3.* These are the Wares, which do all come to the same amount: if ye would know what that is: ye may consider *David* *two* wayes, one is properly and personally, as he is the Son of *Jesse* and King of *Israel*: It's the Covenant which was made with him, a main Article whereof was, *that out of his loine, there should one spring, who should sit upon his Throne for ever*: and thus *the sure mercies of David,* are Christ and his benefits: The other way that ye would look on *David* is, as he was a Type of Christ the Anti-type & Principal Covenanter or confederating Party with God: and so in effect it turns to the same thing: only this latter way is more clear: So then we look on *David* here: as it is not unusual for the Scriptures to hold him forth, *viz.* As a Type of Jesus Christ; and indeed the words following do abundantly clear it: for *David* Personally considered was now long since dead and gone, and was not *the witness* nor *the leader of the people*: Therefore it must needs be Jesus Christ that here is meant, mainly and Principally at least: As is very clear *Acts 13. 34.* Christ then being looked on as here understood, *The sure mercies of David,* are the sure Mercies Covenanted and bargained (to speak so) to Christ before the World was: and it plainly implies, that there was a Covenant or bargain

betwixt the Father and the Son about the Elect before the beginning of the World, whereof as to the benefits therein Covenanted to the Mediator, the Gospel maketh an assignation to Believers in time. 2. We have the Chap-man (to say so) or the Merchant to whom the wares are offered: It is he that *thrifts*, he that wants and would have: and if any serious Poor souls should think, that they are not suitably sensible of their wants: then, saith the Lord, *Let him that hath no money come*, that is, plain dyvours (as we speak) or bankrupts that have nothing. 3. We have the terms on which all are offered to sale, and they indeed suit wondrously well with the Merchant: *Come* (saith the Lord) *Buy without Money and without price, Hear and your Soul shal live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you*: There is (to speak so with reverence) not a Purse opened in, nor a penny payed for the Assignation of this bargain: though by Christ's satisfaction there was a very great, a very costly and dear price payed: when Christ came to buy and make a purchase of all these Mercies for the Elect, the Market was very high and the prices were up: but when Believers come, by the Covenant of Grace to receive them, the Market is come down, and the prices are fallen wonderfully low: that which stood him very dear is to be had by them *Gratis* very freely, even for nothing: It's good that Christ was at the Market before us, He hath cheapened the Prices admirably: & lest any should think, that though there be no Merit, yet something must



must be to Mollifie the seller, and to commend the Merchant to him: It's said, *Let him come without Money and without price*, without money or money worth, he that hath no commending qualification is bid come.

4. We have the Proclamation of this Market, as Grace hath choice wares and sets them out very freely to sale, so it keeps them not close shut up; but brings them forth to publick view: and to every one, *Ho Come to the waters*, it inviteth all to Come (as it were) to the shore, as if some fleet were come in with rare and rich Commodities, for which men were to pay nothing: the Proclamation is, *Come and buy without Money*: and because Grace will not easily take a nay say, there is *O Ho*, an Oyes Prefixed, *Ho come and buy*: But because there is dulness and slowness on our part. Notwithstanding all this, there is an expostulation added, *vers. 2. Wherefore spend ye your money for that which is not Bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?* The Assignment of the Bargain and the offer of the wares, are again urged, *Come, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you*: And to let us know that this is sure, He subjoines, *vers. 4. I have given him for a witness and leader to the people*: That all who are sensible of their own inability to come, may be heartned to it in hope of his help to enable them.

We shall only in short, Observe these Two Points of Doctrine From the words. The first whereof is, that, *There is a most gracious and mercifull transaction betwixt the Father and the Son for the good and Salvation of poor Souls, even of all the elect, past before the World was.* These are sure Mercies bargained to David; for they are first his; This is clear from that part of the words; *Even the sure mercies of David.* The Second is, that, *all those mercies are put to sale in the Gospel to (dyvour)*

bankrupt sinners' upon exceeding easy, low and condescending terms.

The *First doctrine* is implied, viz. That the Covenant of Redemption, wherein there were so many given to Christ, whole Price he undertook to pay, is sealed and established, according to that John 6. 39. *This is the Fathers will, that of all he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* The *Second* looks to the Administration of this Covenant, By the covenant of grace in the Gospel, according to Vers. 40. *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day:* So that, what is laid on the Son, vers. 39 As the condition of this Covenant, is in the 40 vers. made offer of to Believers by the Gospel.

The *First Doctrine* hath two branches; The *First* whereof is, *That there was a transaction concerning the Salvation of lost Sinners, betwixt the Father and the Son before the World was?* A Covenant made with David, before it is or can be declared and Preached in the Gospel, the terms whereof were resolved on, and all the Articles of it agreed upon; The Father proposing, and the Son accepting the bargain from eternity; as is clear, Psal. 40. 6, 7. Where, when it is, as it were, consulted what shall be the Price of Redemption, It is not Sacrifices nor burnt Offerings; but *a bodie hast thou Prepared me; Behold! come, in the Volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God;* Which is expressly applied to Christ, Heb. 10 7. This is easily cleared from the consideration of the parties contracting, and of the ends for which this Covenant was undertaken, and of the effects that follow upon it.

The *Second Branch* of the *Doctrine* is, that *this as to sinners*



sinners is a most gracious and mercifull, a most kind, loving and lovely transaction, exceedingly for the behove and advantage of Sinners. There are Four words in the Text, Which hold out this ; 1. The Nature of this Covenant is *Mercy* , all the Articles of it Savour strong of Mercy to sinners ; They are exempted , though Christ came under sore strokes : whether we consider this Covenant as exacting of Christ ; or promising to Christ , it is alwayes for sinners behove. 2. It is a Covenant of *Mercies*, of many various mercies, So, 2 Sam. 23. 5. It is said to be an everlasting Covenant ordered in all things and sure ; and, 2 Pet. 1. 4. It is said , according as his divine Power hath given unto us all things, that pertain to life and Godliness : Mercies of Justification , Pardon of sin, Sanctification in all its graduall advances, of fellowship with God, of grace and Glory, even of every good thing, or good things of all sorts. 3. It's very gracious and mercifull in respect of the excellent kind of these Mercies, they are not common mercies ; but mercies of *David*, bestowed upon his anointed ; Christ is furnished and filled with them , That out of his fulness we may receive and grace for grace : even grace in a good measure. 4. They are stable mercies, not fleeting and quickly gone ; not a glance of Mercy which evanisheth, the Covenant is everlasting , and the mercies are the sure mercies of *David*.

If we might Particularly go through all the parts of this Covenant , Mercie will be found sweetly looking out in everie article , clause and Circumstance of it. Look first ; more generally to the whole of it ; it's all loving kindnesses and mercies to sinners ; Look to Christ's Sufferings and Death , O ! what mercy shines conspicuously there ? To his qualifications for the discharge of all his Offices ; to his anointing with the spirit

without measure; There is great mercie there; to all the Promises made to him, such as these, *He shall see his seed; the Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; by his knowledge shall he Justifie many; He shall have a willing People*, Eternally to reign with him, &c. Are not these loud speaking Mercies? The grace and wisdom that is on the Fathers side, and the grace and love that is on the Sons side, are all for the behove and good of sinners; It's all wonderfully behovefull; is it not great Mercy to you believers, that you were minded in this bargain? The Lord Christ, as God, neither needed nor was capable of any accession of Grace; he took the relation of our Redeemer and Mediator, and as such in the humane nature, was filled with Grace and Bowels of Mercy and Compassion, that Grace and Mercy might look through that relation to us. Secondly, And more particularly, look to the rise of it; It bred in Gods own bosome (to speak so) *John 3. 16. God so loved the world, that He gave his only Begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on Him, might not perish, but have Eternal life*; and the Son laid down His life out of pure love; there was no necessity on him to do so, but what he voluntarily came under; there was no Motive from us to it, nor had he any adviser to it. Thirdly, Look to the manner of his undertaking; It was very readily, Chearfully, and with ardent, vehemently ardent love; So that we may say of it as of that Chariot mentioned, *Cant. 3. 10. It is made of, and Paved with Love, for the Daughters of Jerusalem*; The Elect being under the curse, Christ out of meer love undertakes to satisfy Justice for them; *Sacrifices will not do it, rivers of Oyle will not do it, The first born of the body will not do it, nor satisfy for the sin of the Soul*; What will do it then? Grace suggests, that the Son shall become man;



man, and do it, and the Son saith, *Lo I come*; O! What love and mercy are here? *Fourthly*, Look to the *Contrivance* of it; and there ye will find much Grace and Mercy; that it is made with a *Mediator*, and with a mediator that is a *Surety*, that the stock is bestowed on him and put under his Custodie, that the Promises are made to him and the Price exacted from himself. *5ly*, Look to the Manner of executing it; what love, Grace and mercy shines forth in the Father, in taking vengeance on his only begotten Son for us? What love in the Son, in yeelding to take it on, and in his leaving his manifestative Glory for a time, that he might undergo the curse, and in his doing all this with delight? *Sixthly*, Look to the confirmations of this Covenant; the Oath of God on the Fathers side, the death of the Mediator on the Sons side; and he hath freely bequeathed it, as a confirmed Testament and legacy to us Believers; and hath instituted Sacraments to be Seals thereof; O! what mercy upon mercy! *Seventhly*. Consider the effects of it; it runs in the sweet streams of Grace, into the vast Gulfe and Ocean of Glory; Wonderfull mercy? *Eighthly*, Look to the Parties Confederating and Covenanting; the Father, Son, and Spirit, all are here, And, it's Grace and mercy that they Covenant, 2. Who are the Contrivers of it? Are not even they in their deep wisdom, and in their exuberant, Superabundant and infinit Grace and mercy? 3. What is the end of it? *Even the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*, Eph. 1. 5. Grace bringing forth and manifestly shewing here it's great master-peece. 4. As infinit wisdom and love contrive, so infinit Power executs it: and when all these concur in this bargain: when the infinitely wise God, all the Persons of the most Glorious Dreadful and Adorable Trinity (as it were) set themselves to set forth

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forth

forth the Glory of free Grace, to make Angels and Saints Behold and Admire in it infinit Wisdom and incomprehensible love, what a rare piece must it needs be? And this is the end of it, as is clear: *Ephes. 3. 9.* *That all men might see what is the fellowship of this Mystery: which from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who Created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent, that now unto the Principalities and powers in the Heavenly places, might be known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God.*

The Second Doctrine is, That this good and gracious bargain, that's past betwixt the Father and the Son, which is wholly mercie, is brought to the Market and exposed to sale, on exceeding easie and condescending termes, and that to bankrupt sinners: What Proclaims the Lord here? even this; I will give you the Sure mercies of David: That which I and my Son have carved out for the glory of Grace, and for a proof of the riches of my bounty, I will make all over to you freely. Hence *Ephes. 3. 8.* *It's called, the unsearchable riches of Christ; So that, whatever Christ hath as Mediator, It is holden forth here; That out of his fulness we may receive Grace for Grace, a Proportion of all the Grace that is in him.*

In Prosecuting this point, we shall shew, 1. More Particularly what this bargain is, that is put to the sale. 2. Who the Merchant is. 3. What are the termes on which, and how it is made. 4. What is the manner how the Gospel puts home this bargain, and layes Christ and his fulness forth upon *Stands* in the Market-place, as it were, (to speak thus with reverence of this Divine Mystery) that there may be free access, to whosoever will come, and buy these rare and rich Wares and Commodities.

As for the *First*, that ye may know what the Bargain is



is, and what is in your offer in this day of the Gospel, Take it in these few Particulars ; 1. All that ever any Believer in the world had, is put to sale here ; if any Believer ever had fair Priviledges, sure it was *David* ; if any ever had a mercifull bargain, he had it ; and such is this Covenant ; Justification, Adoption, peace with God, Grace and Glory ; all these Marrowie, Materiall, massie and essentiall blessings that *David* had, it was not another Christ, nor another Heaven, nor Another Covenant of Grace that he had, but the same that's here.

2. Consider it further, and we will find it to be, all that is made over to our Lord Jesus Christ ; If he had a good bargain, the spirit without measure, fulness of truth and Grace, great Glory and Honour, being advanced to the right hand of the Father, the same is Believers their bargain proportionably, a due and just proportion being kept betwixt the head and the members, *John 1. 16. Of his fulness have we all received and Grace for Grace* : It's not another but the same Grace that our Lord Jesus hath ; yea it's not another Glory they are advanced to ; no other Table they are set down to ; no other Throne they are set on ; but the same Glory, Table, and Throne. It's to *Behold his Glory, to Sit at his Table, To sit with him on his Throne* : *John 17. 22. 24. Luke 22. 30. Rev. 3. 21.* In a word there are not two Covenants of Redemption betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, one for himself and another for the elect : but it's one and the same Covenant for both, though with many vastly different respective considerations and circumstances.

3. Look to the Wares and Commodities (to speak so) that are exposed to sale in the Gospel : they are not only the Promises made to Christ, but Jesus Christ himself is brought forth to the Market, *He* is the great Promise, and far beyond all the other promises made

made in, and the Graces given by the Covenant : *I have given Him* (saith the Lord, *Vers. 4.*) *For a witness and leader to the People* : He is the great gift of God, that Gift of Gifts, being the Fathers fellow : Nothing in Heaven or Earth, no Person, man, or Angel can by far, very far, infinitely far, equall him : to whom can you liken or compare him ? *To us* (saith the Prophet *Isaiah Chap. 9.*) *A Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his shoulders, and his Name shall be called wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace* : this is *David*, most substantial Massie mercy : He is called *Wonderful*, because there is no Possibility for Creatures adequately to conceive, or with exact suitableness to exprels what his Name is, or what is comprehended within his Name.

4. Look on Christ as Mediator, as God-man, *Immanuel God with us* : There is put to the Market (to speak so with reverence) God himself : for thus the Covenant is expounded and Sum'd, as frequently elsewhere in the Scripture, so particularly, *2 Cor. 6. 16.* *I will be their God* : and *Revel. 21. 17.* *He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God.* Now consider all these in a *Conjunction* : viz. What all believers have : what Christ hath, and Christ himself ; what God hath, and God himself : O ! what an incomprehensibly rich and rare, great and Glorious bargain is this ! and yet all is by the Gospel brought forth, laid before the bearers of it, and made offer of to them, on most easie and wonderfully condescending terms. May we briefly and in a few words sum up what is in it ? 1. All things that may make up believers their Peace with God, and remove the quarrel. 2. All things pertaining to, or needful for life and godliness, as it is, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* 3. All things that belong to the comfort and consolation of



of Believers, even *strong Consolation*, as it is called *Heb. 6. 18.* There is **no** want so great, but there is a sup-  
 plie for it here, no case so sad, but there is a comfort  
 for it here; there is not any thing that looks like a crack  
 or uncertainty, but there is sufficient security for it here,  
 in this Covenant, (*in this most full and wonderfully  
 well ordered Covenant in all things and very sure*) to all  
 who are fled to Christ for refuge. 4. There is in it what  
 is needful and requisit to full satisfaction, to the Solace,  
 delight, joy and compleat happiness of the persons that  
 cordially close with it: So that a Soul can crave no  
 more, nor wish for more; It is even *all their desire*, as  
*David* saith of it, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* *It's Mensura voti,*  
*nay ultra mensuram voti*; it never entered into mans  
 heart to conceive much less to desire it. It makes the  
 Soul say, as it is *Psal. 73. 24.* *Whom have I in Heaven*  
*but thee? There is none on earth, whom I desire besides*  
*thee*: It hath *all things* in it: as it is, *Rev. 21. 7.* *He*  
*that overcometh shall inherit all things*: For if God and  
 Christ, Grace and mercy be in it, is there any thing a  
 missing? or can there possibly be any thing wanting in  
 it? May I not very confidently ask you; Is it not a  
 good bargain? If the Father Son and Holy Spirit,  
 Grace, Heaven and Glory be a good bargain; this is  
 then most certainly a good bargain, a wonderfully good,  
 matchless, and non-such bargain: and is not this Gos-  
 pel, whereby all these great things are brought to the  
 market, good news? Take heed then that ye receive  
 not this Grace in vain, that these wares worthy of all  
 possible intertainment and welcome stand not before  
 you unbought: I say again take heed, that ye receive  
 not all this Grace in vain, that these Precious and costly  
 wares go not from the Market unbought up.

*Secondly, Who are the Chap-men or Merchants? You*  
 would

would have readily thought that such wares would have required mighty Monarchs, great States-men, learned Philosophers, or holy Kings, Prophets, Apostles and great men; And yet the Proclamation is (for grace cometh ordinarily in the lower way) *Ho, every one that thirsts, and he that hath no money*: these are the merchants who are meet for this rich Ware: Are there any that want what may make them happy, and would faine have? Are there any that have their peace to make with God, any that have not their interest clear, and made sure? any that are wrestling with a bodie of death, and groaning under it? Any that faine would have sin pardoned and subdued? Any that would have Grace, heaven and Glory, and have nothing to give for all these or any of them, and who have spent many years labour in vain and to no purpose, to come by them? It's to you, even to you that all these rich Wares and rare commodities are in a speciall manner offered in this cryed Fair of free grace. And to clear this a litle, I suppose, there are none of you but you are someway under one of these *Three*, though the externall call and offer comes indifferently to you all. Ye are either, 1. Senseless and secure; and to you the Gospel saies, *How long ye fools will ye love simplicity? And how long will ye sleep, O sluggards?* As there is a Challenge and regrate here, So there is a condition all offer made to you, in as far as it is here implied, that the Offer is made to them. *Who have no bread* and have been bestowing their labour on that which satisfies not: glutting themselves with the world, or wrapping themselves up in the groundless conceit of their own righteousness; To such it saith, *How long will ye spend your labour for that which is not bread*: Or, 2. Ye are some way affected with sin, lying under Convictions, stung, someway burnt up, and consumed



consumed with the apprehensions of the wrath and terrors of God; The word which this Offer hath to such is, the very first in the Proclamation, *Ho, every one that thirsts, Come*: and as we expostulated with the first sort, viz. senseless secure unconcerned, proud and conceited standers aloof, so we bid you earnestly come: and if ye shall say, your conviction hath no edge with it, it is not deep enough: We *Answer*, let him that hath no money come: if ye have quite given over all Hope of your Prayers and other Performances, as to making your peace with God by them, and have in that respect utterly renounced your own righteousness, and so, have no money, no price: though ye be not pinched and pricked at the heart under the sense of sin and deserved wrath, as ye would: yet come, O come. Or, 3. Ye are such as have taken with your sin and lost state, and are in some measure, though but faintly (at least to your own apprehension) stirring towards Christ, and would fain be at him: up, for to you the offer most kindly sayes; *Hear and your souls shall live, eat and be satisfied*. The wares are not brought forth and laid before you, that ye should only (to say so) block or cheapen, and ask the price; but also and mainly, that ye should buy, eat and feed on them; The Gospel doth not, as it were, so much offer to make with you a bargain, as it offers you the benefit of a bargain already made, viz. With Christ: and thus these *Three* take in every person that wants, and is not, it may be, so sensible of it, and every one that wants and would have.

For the *Third*, viz. The *Terms* on which the closing of the bargain depends: they are holden forth in *Four* words in the *Text*, with *Two* qualifications: which make up the terms. The first word is, *Come*; and that supposeth

supposeth peoples leaving of their present standing-place and posture, and their moving towards the Market-place, where the rich Ware is exposed to sale. The Second Word is, *Buy*; which imports a Price put on the Market-Ware, a valuing of it, and a sort of treating to make it ours. The Third Word is, *Hearken*, *incline the ear*, to wit, to God, and to his word, to believe and receive it, and your souls shall live. And the Fourth word is, *I will make an everlasting Covenant with you*; which implies an engagement by Covenant to the Lord, after bearing and inclining the ear to his word, a striking of hands and closing with the bargain. Add to these the qualifications, viz. *Coming*, buying, striking hands (as it were) and closing the bargain, and that without offering Money or Price, Money or money-worth, without offering or giving any thing less or more in compensation.

*Fourthly*, Let us see how the Gospel puts all this to the Market; so that, where it comes, those that are called must either close the bargain, or it will be their own fault. *First*, it Proclaimes the Fair-(as it were) to all round about, that there are such wares to be had, and at such a Price, the rarest and richest wares and Commodities, and at the cheapest rates that ever the world heard tell of. 2. It doth not only Proclaim, but invite and double the invitation to come. 3. It not only invites, but puts the invitation so home, that People must either make the price, (to say so, though it may be soon made, there being in effect no price) and buy, or refuse the Bargain: If they will not be at the Paines to come in to the shop, as it were, It brings forth the wares and lays them down in the Market-place, and (as it were) on Stands in the street: and cries, Come, buy, come and enter the Covenant freely: and this it doth



doth by a frank offer, by earnest and perswasive inviting, and by the easie Conditions that it proposeth the bargain on: It stands in a manner with armes stretched out, ready to receive all comers very freely, whatever their Poverty, wants and necessities be: It craves no more but that we willingly take what he offers to put in our hand: *The righteousness of Faith saith not, who shall ascend to Heaven, or shall descend to the depth?* there is nothing now to be suffered, nor to be Purchased by any more suffering: *But the word is near thee in thy heart and in thy mouth.* It layes the ware at our very door (as it were) So that we have no more to do, but to stoop down and take it up: but heartily to say the word, and it is a bargain.

Now for *Application*: may we not resume, and say, that there is a good and excellent bargain to be had in the Gospel, and on very good and easie terms? It's a Market day, and indeed it were a pity that such wares should be brought to the Market, and that few or none should buy: that Christ should (to speak so) open his pack and sell no wares. Therefore let me say a few words to you for perswading you readily and presently to embrace the Offer of this richest Bargain. And in the *First Place*, we pray you believe this truth: Alace! there is little or no faith given to it: Souls come straitened, not thoroughly believing, that God is putting Christ, Grace and Glory, Heaven and Happiness and all to Sale: These are dayes of *The Son of man*, in a special manner, wherein Christs fleet (to speak so with Reverence) is come home, the Shops are now well furnished with Rich Commodities, all his *Stands* are set out and full of Grace. *Secondly*, Wonder that God hath condescended to make offer of such a bargain to us: that, that which

cost

cost Christ so very dear, is offered so exceeding cheap to us. *Thirdly*, We exhort and obtest you, that while these choicest wares are set to sale, ye receive not this offer in vain: Are there any Merchants here for such wares? Here is the Market, the wares are good and sufficient, and the terms very easie, and the Price wondrously low, even so low, that it comes to no *Money*, no *Price*: can ye Possibly with a better bargain or more easie terms? Are there any chap men that want *Money*, any that are *Thirsty*, then Come; yea be the frame and disposition of your heart what it may be, if you would have it righted, come; there is here that which will make you Rich & Happie here and hereafter: are there none of you that will seriously ask, what the Lord will say, what Christ will take (as it were) for these wares, or what are his terms; with a sincere resolution to take them on these very terms? Will ye not be Prevailed with to make experimental tryal, what it is to have *Christ Made of God to you wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*? Are there none among you all that have sins to be pardoned, wants to be supplied, strong and stirring Corruptions to be subdued and mortified? Is it Possible that so many are come hither for the fashion? Are there none living at distance from God, nor under his curse really or to their own apprehension, that would have the distance and curse removed? Are there no weak Graces to be strengthened? If there be any such merchants that have a mind and heart to the wares: I say to them from the Lord, as his Herald: *Ho every one that Thirsts, and he that hath no money come*: This is the scope of the Gospel, and the preparation for Christ, and also for the Communion, that it calleth for from poor Souls, that would fain close the bargain, and set their Seal to it, and would have

Gods



Gods Seal set to it to morrow by taking the Sacrament. Speak, what say ye? Pose and put your hearts to it to declare, if they be indeed willing and well content to make and hold the bargain on his own terms; if they be so, (as there is all the reason in the world they should;) then I say, ye have a good bargain: I say again speak, pose your hearts, if ye will make and hold the bargain on these terms or not.

There are these things that do singularly commend this bargain. *First*, the excellencie of it; ye will go through all the Markets in the World, ere ye get such rich Mercies, of so rare a kind, so sure and so cheap; ye would, belike, think much to have so much land, gold or money; but what are those to this bargain? Those will evanish and turn to ashes, when this will endure and abide with you for ever: What are ye doing? Who are like so many Horse-leaches, sucking up, and glutting your selves with the world, or living securely and carelessly, or purchasing up your own righteousness; is there any of those bargains like this? we appeal to your own consciences, and nothing doubt, but they will one day bear witness against you, that ye heard of such a bargain and had it in your offer, and yet wilfully refused to accept of it. *Secondly*, Is there any bargain more suitable for you; who have your peace to make with God; for you who have corruption lively in you, then to have a King, Captain and conqueror to bring it down and to trample on it, after he hath as a Priest reconciled you to God? Is there any more suitable bargain for you, who have your own pinches and straits, and your Comforts at a very low ebb, for you who have wants which cannot be numbred, and who cannot of your selves command one stayed spirituall thought? If ye were perfectly righteous and fairly landed in Eternity,  
ye

ye might possibly think the less of it ( though even  
Glorified Saints put a great value on it, and glorious  
Angels admire it ) but that sinners dwelling on earth in  
cottages of clay, whose habitation is in the dust, should  
think little of it., it's strange and even stupendious : Is  
there or can there be a more suitable bargain for you  
that want money ? Is it not exactly calculated for your  
case and shapen out for you ; so as in every thing it  
may meet with your wants, difficulties and Objections?  
*Thirdly*, Are not the terms most reasonable ? No great  
thing is sought for from you ; if a Lordship or a King-  
dom were offered to a poor man for a Penny, that hath  
no money at all, it would signifie nothing at all to him ;  
But behold here peace and Pardon, Grace and Glory,  
even all good things are offered to you freely. *Fourthly*,  
Is not your necessity such, that ye cannot be well with-  
out it ? For tho ye should spend your money, and be-  
stow much labour, and even wear out your very eyes  
with weeping and your hearts with grief and sorrow, if  
ye take not this course, all will only have this Motto  
written thereon, *Vanity of vanities, all is but vanity  
and vexation of spirit* : when ye come to feed on it, ye  
will find it to be but wind : if peace with God, if God  
and Christ, if grace and Glory be necessary, then this  
bargain is necessary ; but if ye will continue lazie, in-  
different, Luk-warme and unconcerned in the matter ;  
ye shall find that ye have sitten in your own light great-  
ly, and suffered the opportunity of the Market to slip,  
which ye will never possibly recover : And therefore for  
the Lords sake, let neither legall weeping, carnal fear  
or sorrow, hypocrisie, self-conceit, nor mistakes of  
Christ and of free Grace divert you from making this  
bargain : but seek Grace, come over these and all other  
obstructions, and while the Market lasts, *Come and  
buy*



*buy without money and without Price.* It is hard to know how long your day shall last: There are many Countreysides and Cities, in the streets whereof these Packs (to say so) of rich wares were opened up, Laid forth and exposed to sale, that now for many years, yea for several ages have not heard of them, nor the Gospel preached: what (at least in Purity and Power) is now in *Jerusalem*, and in the seven famous Churches of *Asia*, But the voice of *Terreur*, and as it were, the Screeching of Owls? and seeing God is not slack, as men count slackness, what know ye, when the Kingdom of God may be taken from you, and given to others? And when he will cry (to speak so) Pack and go? Every day is not a Market day, every Lords day is not a Communion day: many Congregations in *Ireland* and else where have sadly found this, wherein it hath come to pass, that great scarcity and want are come where there was once great plenty. And to press this a little further, We may in the *First Place Ask*, whereat it sticks and halts? I tell you, that there either must be a bargain, or it must (and will sometime) be known where the blame lyes: were it but the bare reading of these very words, they bring the invitation and offer to you, and will ye dare to cast at the wares, or the terms on which they are offered? Grace brings a good bargain to you and stoops very low with it. For *1.* It will not stand with you on bygones, if now you deal honestly, *The sure Mercies of David* will cover and blot out those: and if any of you think, that ye have much debt on your head, as who hath not? It will not upbraid you: *the iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and shall not be found.* There shall be, as it were, Scores drawn through them, your accounts shall be all dashed out by free graces Pen: This is a cryed Fair and Proclaimed Market of free grace,

grace, from which no honest comer shall be secluded,  
 thrust back or sent away empty; for here an empty purse  
 needs not make a (blate o) bashful Merchant. 2. Grace  
 stands not precisely on fore preparations (where Souls  
 honestly and sincerely come) as that ye have not been  
 so and so humbled, and have not such and such previous  
 qualifications, as ye would be at; Nay someway it  
 excludes these, as offering to bring money and some  
 price, which would quite spoile the nature of the Market  
 of free grace; nay yet me say further, if it were possible  
 that a soul would come without sense of sin, Grace  
 would embrace it: sense of sin being no condition of the  
 Covenant, but a Physicall (to speak so) qualification  
 of the Covenanter, and grace is free to them that want  
 it: and let it be supposed to be in a person void of Grace  
 and still in unrenewed black nature, it's there but a  
 splendid sin, as those shadows of Morall vertues in all  
 meerly natural men, are; Grace can, at the instant of  
 coming, creat qualifications: there could readily be no  
 qualifications in *Zacheus* when he was on the tree: Yet  
 Christ tells him, *Salvation this day is come to thy house*.  
 3. Grace stands not on the want of any effect of Faith,  
 where it calls to believing: it will not stand on dark-  
 ness of interest, nor on want of progress in Sanctificati-  
 on, nor on things being out of order: for where it  
 comes, it puts things in order; It will be no relevant  
 exception for a person that hath not closed with the bar-  
 gain and hath not embraced Christ, to say, alace! I  
 have no love to God, to the Godly and to his interest:  
 because Grace can say, thou hast not closed with Christ,  
 and so canst not have the effect before the cause: come  
 and close, and these and other effects shall follow. 4. It  
 stands not on degrees of Faith, nor on the strength firm-  
 ness and height of it; it will take little, even a look, or  
 a glance



a glance of the souls eye that sees not clearly, according to that memorable word, *Psal. 34. 5. They looked to him and were lightened*: the more that souls look to Christ, their eye grows the clearer: it will take an honestly willing mind and hearty consent, though the ability be very little, a receiving or a sincere minting at receiving of the offer: *Him that comes*, or is really a coming, though he be not yet come, at least, as he thinks, but is, with the Prodigal, still (as he apprehends) afar off, *Will Christ and Grace in no case cast out*: for no sooner doth spiritual life stir in Faiths weakest acting and moving towards Christ, but Grace meets it. 5. It stands on no concomitants, though there should be many Idols and lusts raging in the person, if there be a reall consenting by Faith to the bargain, with a sincere resolution to abandon all these, grace will not send him away empty: or if the man say, *Lord I believe help my unbelief*, that is a done bargain: nay, were it to come with many spiritual issues and sores running, and with fear to presume, and as it were, to steal a hint of Christ; not to speak a word to him, but to touch him: He will not be angry nor upbraid, but will say, *go in peace, thy Faith hath made the whole*. We may Ask yet, further to the recommendation of Grace. 1. Was there ever a Merchant that came to the market with that purpose, to buy on its own terms, that went away empty and without wares? If all the Congregation of the first born were put to it, they would be ready to bear witness, that Grace never stood with them on any qualification in them, when they came honestly. 2. I Would Ask, was there ever any that adventured honestly on it, whom it mis-gave? That hazarded (to speak so) and yet fell by the way, or that ever repented themselves that they hazarded and entrusted their Souls

Souls to this bargain? 3. Let me *ask*, was there ever any that took hold on and griped it, in whose hand it brake? The bargain and Covenant *is everlasting*? the mercies are *sure mercies*, once sure and alwayes sure once rich and for ever so; It was and is a *Covenant well ordered in all things and sure*: blessed for ever by the contriver and suretie thereof. Some may possibly think, that this doctrine looks to be somewhat lax (or loose): But sure Grace is not lax; for as we may say of Gods power; *Is anything too hard for him?* So we may say of his Grace, *Is anything too free for it?* Only abuse not Grace, prostitute it not, turn not you back on it, neither turn it into wantonness; It ye look on grace, and cheapen only and do not buy; or if ye bid for one piece of it only, and not for all; We unto you, that ever is was offered unto you: what would ye be at? Is it Holiness, Heaven and happiness, and that freely? They are here; Is it Christ and Christ freely and all that is his? He is here in your offer; what means then this whining (to speak so) and standing so much on terms, as if the way of grace were a hard untoward unpassable way, and as if God were a hard master? Nay, it's a good soft, sweet, easie way, and plain to them that walk in it, and God the best Master that ever Rich or Poor served, and the easiest to serve and the best to please, where there is sincerity and willingness to live honestly; he pities and spares all upright hearted servants, *As a Father pitieth his Children and a man spareth his son that serveth him*: And if any think they find it otherwise, it's most certainly their own fault. Therefore, I beseech you, study *First*, To be careful to take Graces wares home with you, Repentance, Faith, Hope, Love, Mortification, Meekness, Patience, &c. These things are in the Covenant betwix

Christ



Christ and you and let to Sale in the Market. 2. Be making ready, for the Market is ready: many shops, (as it were) are opened and much precious ware laid out: bring empty vessels and not a few, that ye may carry them away full, that ye may take a Rich loading home with you: though you take up never so much of this ware, it will never be missed nor grow the less; and indeed it is a part and a considerable part of our preparation for the Communion, to be rooted in the Faith of these great things and to get our affections stretched, dilated and widened to receive them: *To get the everlasting doores cast up, that the King of Glory may come in,* That when he calls for entrie, the doors may be opened at the very first knock. 3. If so be your desires be stirred up, and your appetites quickened in any measure: there is nothing that will more effectually and powerfully stir them up, provoke and sharpen them, then grace believably looked to, and improved: longing to see his Power and Glory, as they have been seen by his people in the Sanctuary, would notably make way for him: pleading and working with your own hearts alone, will not do the business, but grace imployed and made use of will do it effectually and to purpose: and the more Grace you draw forth out of Christs fulness and drink, so much the better: It will be (to speak so) no forestalling of the market: neither will the sweet favour of the perfume be the weaker or less to morrow, that ye break the Box of this Precious ointment to night. Now God himself who

H

proclaimes

proclaimes the Fair : sets the Market : and exposeth the Rich ware to sale , give you wisdom to Prove wise merchants to your Eternal advantage and up making.

## A S E R M O N

Preached after the Communion,

*On Psal. 85. 8. He will speak Peace to his People and to his Saints : but let them not turn again to Folly.*

**I**T is hard to know in Spiritual exercises, whether it be more difficult to attain some good frame, or to keep & maintain it, when it is attained: whether more seriousness is required for making peace with God, or for keeping of it, when made: whether more diligence should be in preparing for a Communion, or more watchfulness after it: sure, both are required, and it was our Blessed Lords word, *Matth. 26. 41. after the first celebration of this his Supper, Watch and prayth :t ye enter not into Temptation*: Here that saying holds eminently, *non minor est virtus, quam quæerere, parta tueri*: No lesse vertue and valour is requisit to maintain, then to make a purchase or Conquest.

In



In the words ( to leave the introduction and scope ) There is first, a great mercy promised from the Lord to his People, *viz. He will speak peace to them.* 2. A speciall caveat, and advertisment given them, pointing at their hazard, *But let them not turn again to follie:* That is, Let not his People and Saints, to whom He hath spoken peace, return to sin; Let them beware of bounding and dallying with Gods mercy, and of turning his Grace into wantonness, of cooling in their affections to him, of slipping back to their old way, and of embracing their old lovers and Idols; For that is folly, even *in folio*, to speak so.

We shall first propose *Six Observations* from the words, and then apply them. First then *Observe*, that *sin against God is an exceeding great folly: it's the foolishst and maddest thing in the world:* Therefore it is here called *Folly*, to wit, in an eminent way and degree: It's that which doth most, ye that which doth in effect, *Only*, marre and interrupt Saints peace: that which *Vers. 2.* Is called *iniquity*, which he so graciously pardoned, is here called *Folly*, because of the follie and madness that is in sin: and it is on this ground and account, that the sinner is so often called a *Fool*, and *Simple* in the Book of *Proverbs*; and *Ephes 5.* The Apostle exhorts Christians, *to walk not as Fooles but as wise*; and *Luk. 15.* The Prodigal is said, when converted, *to come to himself*, as if he had been in a distraction and beside himself, all the while he was going on in his sinful way. This may be further clear; if we

H 2

look,

look, *First*, To the vanity of the matter wherein men sin; is it not follie for a man to sit tippling and debauching away his time, to be given to Harlotrie and filthiness, to neglect Prayer, to Curse and Swear, to let his mind rove upon things that never were nor will be, and wherein there is no profit? There is a great vanity in the matter of sin. *Secondly*, If we look to the sad effects, and bitter fruits of sin; and to the great prejudice that comes by it; It will be found to be desperat Madnes and dear bought pleasure, which is but fancied and Imaginary, and no reall Pleasure: It marres the life of Grace & of peace with God, *and treasures up Wrath against the day of Wrath*; See this verified eminently in *Ahiophel*, that Prodigy of profound Policie (*Whose counsel, in those dayes, with David and Absalom was, as, if one had enquired at the Oracle of God.*) The upshot of whose deep wit was rank follie, when he went and hanged himself: See it also convincingly made good, in the rich Man in the Gospel; To whom it's sadly and surprisngly said, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose then shall those things be?* And what advantage or wisdom is it. I pray, for a man to *gain the whole World, if he lose his own Soul?* O Madly foolish bargain! *Thirdly*, If we look to sin with a Spirituall eye, we will see folly in the very appearance and manner of it; a wicked man in sinning is foolish-like, or looks as like a fool, as *David* did, when he played the *Mad-man* before the King of *Gath*, *Scrabled on the doers, and let his spittle fall*  
on



*on his Beard*: Is it not folly to see a man *Labouring in the fire, for very vanity, loading himself with thick clay, pursuing the East wind*? He is just like a man in a frenzie, who imagines himself to be a King, and to be riding in great State and Triumph, when in the meantime he is a Poor naked Pitifull and despicable creature, in the eyes of all that behold him. *Fourthly*, If we look to the spring, fountain and cause of it; There can be no just nor relevant reason given for sin; It's therefore, no doubt, folly: Is there, or can there be any thing that evidenceth mens folly so much, as their coming in tops with God, their walking in the way of death, their loving simplicity (as it is *Prov. 1.*) And their quitting the way of Life? Now the word of God is true wisdom, and the way of life is therein clearly holden forth, and God as our pattern; and is there any thing more reasonable, then that we should live like, and be conform to the word of God, and to him of whom we ought to be followers? But sin thwarts with the whole word of God, and with God himself.

Take this passing word of Use; Study to be established in the Faith of this truth; That Sin, whether in doing that which is evil, or in the Omission of duty, is the greatest folly: such of you as will not be convinced of it now in time, within a few dayes or years, ye shall be convinced of it to purpose & to your eternall prejudice; The most blockish shall then see it to be follic; a highly hurtfull, prejudiciall, Shamefull folly, and desperat Madnes; The rich *Glorion* and *Astrophel* and thousands more of worldly-wise-men, find it to be so, to their Cost, in Hell: Therefore the Apostle saith, *Rom. 6. 21.* *What profit have ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* And had we Spirituall eyes to discern the Condition of the most part of men and Women, who

H 3

evidently

evidently ly still in black Nature unrenewed, who slight the offers of Grace, and who will not receive Jesus Christ, the veriest idiot in the world would not be a sadder spectacle to us, nor affect our hearts with more pity & compassion, then the Lamentable case of the Souls of such persons would; because they forsake their own Mercie, The sure Mercies of David, and follow after lying vanities, and wearie themselves with a vain pursuit after that which cannot profit them, Alace for this follie!

Secondly, Observe, That notwithstanding the greatness of this follie, Gods people and Saints were sometime deep, yea even drowned in it, and are yet in part taken with it. Needs this any proof? Ah! sinful Nation (saith the Lord to his professing people *Isaiah. 1. 4.*) *A people laden with iniquitie, a seed of evill doers: The Ox knoweth his owner, the asse his Masters crib, but my people doth not know: O beastly Israel! inferior to the very brutes thorow the folly of sinning against God; and saith he, Jer. 2. Be astonished O Heavens; and horribly afraid; for my People have committed two great evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and digged to themselves broken Cisterns, that can hold no water: O egregious follie and demented choice? how many professours of religion are there, who are foolish Virgins? And how many foolish practices are there among the Godly themselves? Let it not then be thought strange (as a word of Use from it) that not only among externall professours, but even among reall Saints, there be found many acts of follie; though I grant it to be both sad and stumbling, when it is; which should therefore, so much the more make them guard against the same.*

Thirdly,



**Thirdly, Observe.** God will sometimes speak peace to them that are given to follie, or are often found playing the Fool. Of the truth whereof, as many as ever heard the Gospel, and did partake of the Grace of it; and are before the Throne, and hope to be there, are as so many proofs; witnesses and living monuments: I shall clear what this speaking of peace is, in Three Steps; He speaks peace to them, 1. In his offering of peace to them; and by his meeting and treating with them in and by that offer, in his intreating or inviting them earnestly to come to him, who have wearied themselves, and spent their labour on that which profits not; pressing them to return, and assuring them that he will heal their backslidings, *Isai. 55. Jer. 3. Hos. 14.* And preaching peace through Christ Jesus, *Eph. 2.* counselling them to come and buy eye salve of him, &c. and by his knocking and waiting at their Door for admittance and entry. *Rom. 3.* Are not these words of peace to a foolish Church? 2. In making peace with some, when (as it is *2 Cor. 5. 20.*) He not only Prayes and requests them to be Reconciled, but really reconcileth them to himself, and saith, *Peace be to you, Pardoneth sin, taketh away the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against them,* giveth them a discharge of their debt: that when their sin is sought for, it is not to be found, because He hath pardoned it; and *Hos. 2.* This is called an alluring, or (as the word is) a speaking to the heart. 3. In his not only taking away the Controversie and making peace; but in his intimating that peace, Saying to the pardoned sinner, *Thy sinnes are forgiven thee, go in peace, I am thy Salvation,* and then the promise *John 14. 21, 23.* Is fulfilled, when Christ breaks open doors and comes in and Sups, and dwels, his Father and he: and one main dish that is set on the Table (to say so) is Peace, as

*Vers. 27. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: It's peace from God the Father Son and Holy Ghost: There are some speciall times, wherein God speaks Peace, such as Solemn treating times and Communion dayes, and other special occasions are, when there hath been more then ordinary diligence in prayer, more then ordinary Sorrow for Sin, peace is readily spoken on the back of it: as also trying and sadly exercising times are usually times of the intimation of peace: In a word when and where this Gospel comes and is made lively, Peace followes on it: and this is your time, O! that peace may be found to have been spoken to many at this occasion.*

*Fourthly, Observe, That, In and about those times, when God hath spoken (or very urgently offered to speak) Peace, there is often some restraint on People, as to the prevailing of their follie: Some stop to the current of Iniquity in it's wonted manner and measure, in some more and in some less; some more aw of God readily being on people then: Many will have a sort of Righteousness, like a Morning cloud and early dew, that soon passeth away; Some tickling of their affections, that quickly vanisheth; as the Lord saith of many of the Jews, that were hearers of John, Who was a burning and a shining light, that they rejoyced in his light for a season: So Psal. 106. 12. Then believed they his words, they sang his Praise; but they soon forgat his works, they waited not for his Counsell; and Psal. 78. 34. When he slew them, then they sought him: Nevertheless they flattered him with their lips and lied to him with their Tongues, for their hearts were not right with God, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant: And something of this was also, even in Christs hearers, and in the Galatians, who at first*



first would have plucked out their eyes and given them to Paul: So in the parable of the Sower, some seed springs up and hath a fair appearance, but soon withereth; and other some holds out: So likewise at Fasts and Communions, affections will be readily somewhat stirred and warmed, and there will be many brave purposes and resolutions, such as were in the people, *Exod. 19.* When they said, *All that the Lord commands we will do:* and they look demure and grave like for two or three dayes; The Tippler keeps some dayes from the Tavern; He that prayed not in secret nor in his family, will, it may be, Pray for some time about and after such occasions; others will go further on; And yet it's but some restraint on their sin, or some fit and flash of affection, that is transient and quickly gone; and they turn again to follie; and even the Godly themselves are here often found, in a great measure guilty, as the following Note will clear.

*Fifthly, Observe, That even these people and Saints, who have sometime been given to follie, to whom God hath spoken peace, and who have restrained their folly for a time thereafter, may much fall back to follie again. The admonition here given, Let them not turn again to folly, Supposeth this: This needs not much proof; If ye shall go through the Saints recorded in Scripture, ye will find sad instances of it: David, after peace was spoken to him, falls into adultery and murder; *Hieremiah*, after a sweet word of peace was spoken to him, *Isaiah* 38. Falls into the follie of Pride and vain ostentation; *Chap. 39.* Peter, after peace spoken to him denyeth his Master: *Jehoshaphat*, after peace spoken to him, fell once and again into the same sin, and once even after he was reprov'd for it; as is clear, *2 Chron. 18. 19. and 20. Chapters:* Or there may be a falling unto some*

other sins; or out of one sin into another; as it was with **David**: This may befall reall Saints, yea eminent Saints, even Pillars in the house of God: was there not peace spoken to the Disciples in that sweet Sermon **John 14.** and **15.** and **16. Chap.** And yet that sad word followes, *Ye all shall be offended because of me this night; And Peter to whom that sweet word was spoken, I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not,* doth foully fall into follie quickly after; what then may befall the more Common sort of professors, who know not what it is to stand before the least temptation? The Reasons of this may be *first*, because the devil falls presently on, and seeks, as it were, with seven worse devils to re-enter the soul, and busks this bait of the temptation, and presents it in a new shape; old courtiers (to speak so) and lusts set on and essay what hearing they can get. 2. Because though, by peace spoken, temptations and corruptions may be bound up, yea and some what Mortified: yet they are not slain outright, they may lurk for a time, but still live. And 3. Because his People are ready in such a warme Sun-blink to grow (as it were) wanton, and under such a cessation from their lusts, to cast by their armes, to grow secure, to grow somewhat too faine, and to dream of an easie life; thus it was in a measure with **David**, as he confesseth, *Psal. 30. I said in my Prosperity, I shal never be moved;* It they get peace for a little, who but they? *They are Lords (in a manner) and will not come unto him;* or if they win to a few tears and some liberty, they are readily puffed up, and in some sort bid their Souls take them rest; as if they needed to trouble themselves no more: Therefore there are new on-sets, and the Lord lets them see how vain they are, even in their best estate: as we may perceive, in the Lords dealing with **Hezekiah**, and with **David**,



*David, in that Psal. 30. Thou didst hide thy face saith he, and I was troubled. O! what follie, vanity and out-breaking of corruption do often follow on the back of a seeming work of turning to God, and a tender like frame in Professors of Religion? So Psal. 106. It is said, that they provoked him at the Sea, even at the red Sea: Even where and when they were in such a frame, that they believed his words and sang his Praise: they soon forgot his Works, And waited not for his Counsel, which was, in a manner, at the very Table to lift the heel against him; And O! how Sad and lamentable a thing is it, to be unwatchfull after a Communion, and an offer or an Intimation of peace!*

*Sixthly, Observe, That, There is nothing more called for from a people, who have been given to follie, and have had Peace spoken to them, then to take heed that they turn not again to folly, To take heed that they fall not into the same sins that they seemed to have abandoned and turned away from: that it be not with them, According to the true Proverb, The Dog is returned to his vomit, and the Sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire, as it is, 2 Pet. 2. 22. Under which similitude, the Apostle powerfully dissuades Professors of Religion from turning again to sin, by shewing the loathsomeness of it: It being as abominable, as a mans licking up again that which he hath vomited. This then is the duty that the Lord calls for: First That you should abstain from the sins that you have been given to, such as tipp'ing, drinking drunk, Swearing, Sabbath breaking, neglect of Prayer and the like, and do so no more: not only not to relapse into the same sins, but that ye abstain from every other sin: It is not enough that a man break off from one sin, and take up with another: It is not sufficient, though*

though a man will not be drunk in his neighbours house, if in the mean time in his own house he supple, play the good fellow (as ye call it) and mispend his time. Secondly, Ye would Consider, what engagements and resolutions ye have come under, and that ye fall not back from them: In a word it is, not to be as ye were wont to be: and that ye be found in no known sin, nor defective in any known duty.

We come now to the more Particular and close Application of the whole, in these *Two Uses*. The *First* whereof is, for Advertisement and warning, *Let him that stands take heed lest he fall*, Let him not look on himself as incapable to be stollen off his feet: Alace! Persons may be, in a manner, exalted to Heaven, and in a very good frame, in their own imagination and apprehension, and it may be, in some measure really; and yet be brought back to the Puddle and Mire again, after they have shaken themselves and come out of it. In prosecuting this, we shal, *First* shew wherefore we presse it, And *Secondly*, Wherein, or in reference to what we presse it.

As for the *First*, viz. Wherefore it is, that I doe presse this advertisement: and indeed it is not without very good ground, as ye will easily perceive, if, *First*, Ye look to and Consider the best Saints and in their best condition: how soon are even they taken off their feet? Was not *David* often in a very good spiritual condition? And yet, how soon and feully did he fall into folly? was not *Adam* in a good and desirable condition, when there was no quarrel betwixt God and him, nor any ground for it? And yet how soon was he ensnared? Was not *Peter* in a good state and frame, when Christ said to him, *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, flesh and blood*



*blood hath not revealed that unto thee, but my Father who is in Heaven?* And yet within a very litle, he turns again so far to folly, as to be the devils instrument to tempt Christ: as is clear from *Matth. 16. vers. 17.* Compared with *vers. 22.* Were not the Disciples in a good condition, when our Lord had Preached to them both the Preparation & thanks-giving Sermons, before and after the Communion? And yet they all were offended because of him, and forsook him and fled, And that very quickly, even that same very night; Now when such tall Cedars fall, what need have we, who are but in comparison, filly shrubs and but as smal strawes, to take warning. Secondly, If we consider that those sins and falls were often exceeding Sudden, the same night, in the Disciples (as I just now hinted,) and in *Hezekiah*, very quickly after his recovery: exceeding foul; and exceeding Universal, as in all the Disciples; Sometimes repeated, as in *Zor, Jehoshaphat*, and *Peter*; sometimes a plurality and variety of them joynd together, as in *David* and *Asa*, and in his People at the Red-Sea and in the Wilderness: And who knows but the same very night, that ye were at the Lords Table, some of you were back at your follie? And others of you before night may be. We said, not only Suddenly, but foullie; as is clear in *Adam*, who when he had no corruption formerly, fell from God to the devil (and by the way, many of you are so grossly ignorant, and woefully self-conceited: that ye think, if ye had been in his case, ye would not have done so.) And (as I hinted) what foul faults were *David's* Adultery and Murder, and *Solomons* Idolatrie, at least his tolerating it, after God had spoken wise to him? What a foul fault and fall was that of *Israels*, After their so Solemn engagements, and fair undertakings. *Exod. 19.* When within forty  
dayes

dayes they detestably and damnably danced before the  
 golden Calfe: & what a foull fall was that of *Peters*, to  
 forswear Christ, by denying him with an oath? And of the  
 rest of the Disciples, unkindly & unworthily to forsake  
 him and flee? And who knows, but shortly after this  
 occasion, many of you that have been tipplers, may  
 grow worse, it may be, even to be found staggering in  
 the streets? And that others of you who prayed not be-  
 fore, may be heard cursing? Ye who are believers and  
 Saints indeed, would Observe this, and know that there  
 is need, great need of watching and Prayer, that ye enter  
 not into Tentation: And if there hath been any idleness,  
 lightness, vanity, mispending of Precious time, or the  
 like; guard, O guard against those: The reason why  
 Believers fall so often in Gross sins, is their playing (as  
 it were) with their Petty Idols; little things given way  
 to lead on to greater and worse. *Thirdly*, Am I now  
 speaking of any strange, uncouth or unpresidented thing?  
 Have ye never Observed, how ye carried and behaved  
 after Communion before? Can ye say, but that, as  
 many Communion as ye have been at, there have been  
 as many breaches? If ye have never failed before, ye  
 may be secure now; but if ye have failed and Mis-car-  
 ried formerlie, be the more warie and watchful now.  
*Fourthly*, Have ye any knowledge of, and acquaintance  
 with your own hearts? Is your corruption dead? Are  
 your Idols quite slain? or are they not rather like to  
 those strange wives, in *Nehemiahs* time, (who were  
 put away) crying on you for pity, (O! cruel pity)  
 and weeping on you to be admitted to come home a-  
 gain? And have none of you so much foolish, fond and  
 cruel Pity, as to side with them? Hath a Communi-  
 on-day, thrust out the devil fully? Are there no living  
 lusts, nor strong corruptions within you? Do ye not  
 see



see what a ready welcome Temptations to sin are like to get? And find ye not a woful propension to be glad, that the restraint and aw-band of a Communion day is over and by? And doth not this press you to watch? *Fifthly*, Try but how it hath been with you since the Sabbath, Is not the bent ye had then, already very much slackened? Is not much of that seeming or really good frame of Spirit gone? Is not the great part of your work yet before you? And is it not a greater difficulty, to make out an engagement, then to make it; to perform, then to Promise? How is it then, that ye have in a great part laid by your armes, as if all were done? When ye have, as Souldiers, put your selves in battell array, and given your military Oath, and gotten the signe and word of command, should you quit your Post? beware of that, the matter is of greater concernement, then ye are aware of: ye are yet but in a manner beginning.

For the *Second* Thing, *viz.* What it is wherein, or in reference to what we do presse your taking warning and being wary? And here I would have you, *First*, To be aware not only of more grosse sins, but even of all such things in general, which Temptations use ordinarily to make their approaches and assaults by; as namely little sins (little I mean Comparatively) *Is it not a little one?* saith *Lot of Zoar*. O! How unsuitable was it for him, to whom the Lord had but a very little before spoken such a great and gracious word of peace, as that; *Depart for I can do nothing, so long as thou art here*: and yet the same night or the Morrow, this escapes him; and readily, when people fall once, they fall over and over again; but ye would be ware to seek leave to lurk and loure a while in such *Zoars*; Beware to say, it's a little Sin: say not, I shall not be drunken, but I must have leave to tipple, and trifle over the time; The devill drives

drives sin and Tentation, as a Carpenter driveth a wedge: he will teach and Prompt you to say, we may be cheerful and sport us a while, without regard to the matter, Measure or season, though ye be not prophane: but, once let in the point of the wedge by a little sin, and it may become a great one ere all be done, or a grosser one may follow, even as the great end of the wedge doth the lesser. *Secondly*, Beware of returning to Omissions. Some, it may be, will resolve that they will never tipple nor Swear, nor Commit any such things; but they will, it may be, neglect and omit to Pray as they have (belike) done these few dayes past: though they go not abroad to the Tavern on the week dayes, nor go idly in the fields on the Lords-day: yet they may mispend and trifle away their time at home, as if falling back into Omissions, were not a turning again to follic, as well as falling back to Commisions: The confessions of many poor Creatures (who become Publickly and Prodigiously Scandalous) on their death-beds or on a Scaffold, that omissions of duty have Predisposed them to, and brought on those grosse Commisions, may and should awake and alarm us: ye would therefore with Holy Job *Make a Covenant with your eyes and other senses, and make Conscience to keep it.* *Thirdly*, Beware of falling back to a secure cold-rise manner of going about duties of worship alone or in Company, in publick or in privat: let none of you think with yourselves, that now this Solemnitie is over, ye need not wrestle in Prayer, nor watch so strictly over your heart, but let it gad and rove, and not hedge it in on an ordinary Lords day, as on a Communion Lords day: since there is no liberty allowed for an idle word or thought any day, more then there is on that day: Think it not enough that ye say your Prayers morning and evening,  
and



and that none can charge you with any offence: God the all seeing God observes you, whether you be universall, sincere and serious in the duties of Religion. *Fourthly*, Beware of neglecting Spiritual and Gospel duties: such as, Self-examination or Self-searching, Self-deniall, Mortification and use making of Christ: The neglect of these and the like, may be some way called Gospel-follie: It is no doubt great Gospel-follie, when Christ (being freely and fully offered therein) is not improved for wisdom, righteousness, Sanctification and redemption: when the power of Godliness is not aimed at in doinge: but People rest and sit down in the form thereof: which yet in some respect is more cumbersome then the power: for Christ improved makes all things go easily with us: Therefore any of you who have looked on it as follie to neglect these spiritual duties, see that ye return not again to that follie. *Fifthly*, Beware of unbelief: have ye not resolved to cast out with that evil, and resolved to be no more jealous of God, though ye should meet with difficulties? Believers in Christ, lick not up that vomit again, turn not again to that follie, to which there is a secret Naturall bentness of heart: If (I say) unbelief and jealousie be a follie, take it not up, turn not to it again. *Sixthly*, Beware of heart-ills: possibly ye will not give way to more gross evils: and yet suffer your Souls to be carried away after Idols, or after vain, proud, Ambitious, Covetous, Revengeful, filthy and Lascivious thoughts: but if in very deed Christ get the heart, he must reign in it and command the Eye, Tongue, Ears, Hands, Feet, and all. *Seventhly*, Beware of falling back to the Inordinat love of the World, and of letting the heart be too much addicted and glued to, even, lawfull pleasures & creature-Comforts, to your Callings, Wives, Children, Houses,

Houses, Lands and incomes of gain and Profit; from which there hath been possibly some fuitable abstrac-  
edness these dayes past: ye should not only abstain from  
oppressing, Stealing and deceiving, but ye would also  
guard against falling back to excessive pursuing after  
and (as it were) glutting your selves with the things  
of this world, however lawfull in themselves. Alace  
*Perimus Licitis*: Inordinat love to, and Immoderat pur-  
suing after things lawfull in themselves destroy more  
souls, then things sinfull and unlawfull in themselves  
do: the excuses of those invited to the Marriage of the  
Kings Son, are founded not on things simply Sinfull,  
but on lawfull things, the Farme, Oxen, and Married  
wife: Now the house is swept, and ye are in Hazard,  
if ye guard not, to return to a greater and greedier  
feeding on those vanities: I dare say, there are Multi-  
tudes of men and Women, who never so much hungred  
for the Communion, as they have longed to have these  
Solemn dayes over and by, that they might win back  
to their Callings, worldly busiesses and pleasures; O  
what a weariness have they been to them? As Sacred  
Solemnities were to those spoken of, *Amos 8.5*. Who  
cried, *When shall the new Moon be gone, that we may  
sell Corn, and the Sabbath day, that we may set out Wheat?*  
To many these dayes of Fasting and Spiritual Feasting  
and Communicating have been as a bridle bit in their  
Mouths, to restrain them from running on the Moun-  
tains of their vanity; and who knows, but ere another  
Communion come, the Lord may feed you as a Lamb in  
a large place?

The Second Use is, For Exhortation; would ye then  
know the duty that ye are called unto? this is it, Let  
not Gods People and Saints turn again to follie, Let not  
the



the Idler return to his Idleness; the tippler to his tippling, the scoffer to his Scoffing; the ignorant, who have been at a little pains to learn some questions before the examination and communion, to his negligence in seeking after knowledge, &c. Let not this be; If ye have vomited out these and other sins, Lick them not up again. To presse this Use a little, we would *First* Give you some considerations from the Text. *Secondly*, Some directions to help you forward in the Practice of it.

For the *first*, viz. Some considerations from the Text to press it; *First*, Is it not a follie to sin once? If so, sure, it is much more to relapse into sin. Whether is it more true wisdom to abstain from those Sins, or to fall back into them: Is it not more wisdom for you who have been given to Tippling or drunkenness, to neglect of Prayer and the like, now to let alone sins, and to give your selves to Prayer, then to be walking in the street on the *Plain-stones*? Is it not more wisdom to be given to edifying discourse, then to be laughing and sporting over the time? Is it not better to come to the Church, then to spend the time Idly, In discoursing and waiting for a Tentation? And if your conscience assent to the truth of this, then we take witness in your Conscience, that it doth so, and this Instrument of witness will stand on record against you, if ye shall turn to those sins and to this Folly again. 2. Have ye been examining your selves? And do ye find, that much of your life hath been spent in folly, by Some *Twenty*, by some *Thirty*, by some *Fourthly*, by some *Fifthly*, by some *Sixty* years. And every days account cast up amounts only to folly, vanity and Madnes? And is it not enough, and may it not suffice you, that ye have spent so long time in folly, though ye spend no more so? 3. Hath not God been speaking peace to some, and given

given them the Intimation of it? So that their Souls have been made to say, *God is here*: And have they not gotten the bargain closed, and the hand writing that was against them torn? We hope, there are some such among us? Nay are there any, but the Lord hath been offering peace to them, treating with them, saying *Behold me, Behold me*, intreating and requesting them to be reconciled? And hath there not been some tickling of the affections of many? If so, will ye be such fools as to fall back, and to wear out the sense of that peace and warmth, that any of you have win to? And ye with whom God hath been meeting and treating about the pardon of sin, what a folly will it be, in place of getting a discharge, to increase and multiply your debt?

4 Are there not some engagements on you? Or what ever be reall, is there not a profession of coming under engagements? Are not the vowes of God on some of you? Is there not some sin that hath stared you in the face, which ye have resolved to abstain from? And hath there not been some stirring and stickling of desires to perform what ye have resolved and engaged to? And will ye break all these bands? Will ye repent and rue that ever ye ingaged to God? If so, as ye notably play the fools, So the Lord will be about with you, and even spew you out of his Mouth, that ye may puddle your fill in the mire of sin.

5. Is there not a great bentness and propension in all naturally to turn again to folie? Is there not an evil heart of unbelief, ready to depart from the living God? I have so much Charity for you, as that you will grant this; and when the Lord hath said, *Watch*, and tells that *He is at hand that betrayeth you*, will ye go securely, and not take warning? O! What desperat folly would this be?

6. Consider what will come of it, if ye shall fall back, if ye slacken your bent.



bent, and growing cold, turn again to folly? ye will wear out any bit of good frame that ye have attained: ye will blur and sully the reall or supposed cleareness of your interest, marr your Peace, and become in a manner more beastly and swinish in your sinfull way then before; At the very thoughts whereof your hearts should scare, Nauseat and even grow sick. And what will be the upshot thereof? Either ye will repent, or never repent: If ye say, ye will repent; are ye sure that God will give you Repentance, If ye shall hazard on some sin? Are not many given up to hardness of heart, who never come to Repentance? Know ye what Repentance is? have ye not been already essaying and doing somewhat at Repentance; and have ye not found it difficult and hard to come by? And if ye shall sin yet more, will not Repentance be yet a greater, more difficult and hard work? and suppose ye should get Repentance, ye shall know the truth of that saying, *Jer. 2. That it was an evil and a bitter thing to depart from the Living God, and that his fear was not before your eyes.* O! what shame and confusion of face will it bring with it, to remember that we had so Many warnings from the word without, and so manie Convictions and challenges from our conscience within, and that yet we went over them, and with a high hand went on in our folly: will those things be litle, think ye? what pleasure or profit can ye have in those things whereof ye will be ashamed? Yea suppose ye come to repentance (and a hundred to one if ever ye come to it) ye shall weep and mourne bitterly, that ever ye hazarded so on sin over your light and convictions, and over the belly of your Conscience? If ye get not repentance (as I am afraid many never shall) what will come of it? Convictions and challenges will wear out; the heart will grow harder, you will

go on Laughing at reproofs , mocking at exhortations to Repentance and Reformation, and regardlesly treading on what might reclaim you ; you will be angrie at them who brought you under any engagements: ye will become very *Atheists* in your hearts , and as so many profaine *Heathens* in your carriage and when you have lived thus for a time ( and the Lord knows how long ) will ye not come to die ? will not your moneth come on you ? will not your bed take you , or ye take your bed ? , and then the Conscience will either awake or be silent ; if it awake, will not this be your language, which is the language of many a poor wretched creature ? *Wo is me*, I have mispent my time, and have been glutting my self with the World and sinfull pleasures : Oh vaine world ! O bewitching and beguiling world ! Alace that ever I was so much taken up with it : And if the Conscience be quiet , what will come of it ? Will that sin ly on , and not be sought account of ? know ye not , consider ye not that word, *Gal. 6 Be not deceived, God will not be Mocked ; As men sow , so they shall reap ?* Think ye that God will be inferior to the Creature ? will not your Governor or Land-Lord seek account of you according to your engagement ? And shall not the Lord call you to a reckoning ? Yea certainly : and the Conscience will then awake and roar on you ; then the curse , *Wo* and damnation will seize upon , and take hold of your Soul in death : and devils shall carrie it thither, where Hypocrites are, untill the Judgement of the great day : and then ye will say , turning again to sin was the greatest folly and madness : And thus, whether God have a purpose of repentance to you or not, ye shall one day rue it at all the veines of your heart ( to speak so ) and shall find the follie of it, and that to your everlasting prejudice and loss, if ye repent not.

And



And therefore let me press this Use upon you, and earnestly exhort you, to let these Considerations sink down into your ears and hearts: Beloved, *We are jealous over you*, and would God it were *with a suitable Godly jealousy*: We are afraid that many, ere we be aware, be down in their former puddle, that ignorance and Proximity be as rife as ever; there have been so many fits and good appearances, and of so short continuance hitherto: and now ye have been making some mint: but what will come of it, if ye fall back? If these ordinances shall do you no good, we know not what will do it: we think ye were never nearer to some great *Crise*, to a tick of being lost or gained: we have you (as it were) *in the very place of the breaking forth of Children*: So that now, you must be either safely and fairly delivered, or prove abortives: Ah! are our fasts and Communion to no purpose? Are all your Purposes and resolutions, your engagements and seeming willingness to engage, to vain and to no effect? If ye shall fall back after this and turn again to folly; I do not much expect that any ordinances, or future engagements shall do you much good: we must either look for better and more fruit, or there will be more barrenness and stubbornness: either ye shall be more Holy, or more of that old sin of Malignity, stoutness of heart against God, and more opposition to Godliness shall bud amongst you: We would from our very Souls wish you brought well thence now; but are afraid there be a sticking. Why is it I pray, that we insist so much with you, if we were not jealous over you? will ye have faces to hold up before God, when ye and we shall be reckoned with, if ye shall sit these warnings? or what heart can we have to go about this service amongst you, if yet there be a sticking: and when there is some wrestling to get you up the hill (as

(as it were) and ye run further down then ever? Q! to be mightily helped of God to travell in birth, to have Christ formed in you, & formed in you again: Is it probable, when many of you are brought further up then before, if ye fall further back, that ever ye will win up again? We apprehend, that there are many of you, who shall never again, with so much moral Seriousness, be wrought upon, if there shall not be now some abiding and effectuall work; *but a turning again to Folly*. It is not, Beloved hearers, the fruit of one preaching or two, that we are now driving at; but the great scope of this blessed Gospel; Therefore, for Christs sake, hold at it, come forward and go not back, *O turn not again to folly*: else be assured, that the Lord and your own Consciences will bear witness, and we his Servants will also bear witness against you. (as many of you will bear witness against us if we shall do so) If after *God hath spoken peace to you*: Ye shall return again to follie. Let me yet add this one word further for pressing this; will ye but consider what we are seeking? is it not your reall good and advantage? is it any hard or unreasonable thing that we crave of you, or any uncouth thing; or any thing but that which *Abraham, David, Paul*, and others of the Saints, were desirous and studious to be at, Yea and our blessed Lord Jesus himself was content to be at? Though he was never indeed tainted with any folly; yet he was content and carefull to fulfill all righteousness; and what seek we of you but that ye would seek and labour to imitate him, that ye would prevent your own loss and ruine, and give Christ a kindly and a hearty welcome, in order to the exercise of all his Offices about you: that *his heart may be made glad*, and that *He may see of the fruit of the Travell of his Soul to his Satisfaction*, in the Salvation of a  
number



number of Souls in Glasgow, O that we could get you prevailed with to be as serious in these things, as ye are in and for the things of this present life: and that we could get as great vent (to speak so) for Christs Precious wares amongst you, as a man would get for some rare Commodity: nay (may I or shal I say?) but even for Tobacco: Alace! that incomparably Precious Jesus Christ, and his purchase, the Everlasting Covenant, even *the Sure mercies of David*, should have less vent and sale, then that and an hundred other commodities have: this is a Lamentation, and should be for a Lamentation: always let bygones be seriously reflected on, and see that by all means, *ye turn not again to Folly.*

As for the *Second* thing Proposed, *viz.* Some *Directions* for preventing your turning again to folly, ye may take these few, and the Lord himself put them home with a strong hand. *First* then, Walk in fear, *Serve the Lord in fear, and reioice before him with trembling; the Wise man sees the evil, but the Fool passeth on and is confident;* There is a sort of Spirituall pride, vanitie and self-conceit, reigning amongst ordinary Professours, and too much of it Prevailing amongst Believers, that undoes them; are there any of you afraid of Fornication & Adultery, or of turning giddy Sectaries and the like? Your want of fear brings you into the mire, ere ye be aware; *Pride goes before Destruction and a Haughty mind before a fall:* The litle fear that is amongst the most part says, that some black turn (as we use to speak) is in their hands, or some foul fall before

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them:

them: Hence the Apostle, *Philip. 2. 12.* Exhorts, *Work out the work of your own Salvation with fear and trembling:* and *2 Cor. 7. 1.* *To perfect Holiness in the fear of God.* Secondly, Observe well and lay due weight on that exhortation of our Lord, *Matth. 26. 41.* (which hath severall directions in it) *Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into Temptation;* look about you, be not secure, stand by your Post, let nothing go out nor come in without strict examination; and seek (as it were) after its *Pass,* and set (as it were) a Sentinel at the Port of every sense; *And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch,* saith the Lord, *Mark 13. 37.* Be not secure; watching is a most suitable duty for Christs Souldiers: fail not to joyn with it much Prayer, not for the fashion, but that which is in the Spirit and fervent; yet lay no weight on it, as if ye could merit any thing by it, but go about it humbly and seriously, in order to the entertaining the life of Grace, sit not up in it, but rather double your diligence. *Thirdly,* Keep the heart well; heart-ills are the Principal ills; *Keep* (saith *Solomon Prov. 4.*) *the heart with* (or above) *all keeping;* Set your main force to guard it, for there Sathan keeps his Court and head-quarter, and thence gives his Orders to the outward senses; dally not with sin in the heart, else it will come a further length. *Fourthly,* Forget not your engagements, but let the vowes of God ly on you, and have due weight with you, let not the sins that ye discovered and saw in your self-examination between God and you, before ye came



to the Communion-Table, be forgotten; but remember them, to repent of them and to renounce them; and when one knot (to say so) of your engagement looseth, cast another faster, or if a knot were weak, strengthen it, or cast a new one; for as acts of Faith must be renewed, so must acts of engaging to God. *Fifthly*, Be much in the exercise of Repentance for your bygone folly, *My sin* (saith *David Psal. 51.*) *Is ever before me*; think not Repentance to be the work of a day or two; look back and reflect on your old sins of tippling, Swearing, enmity at Godliness, &c. For if ye wear out of the exercise of Repentance, ye will wear in, piece and piece on your old sins, against which Repentance is a notable bar; being much in the exercise of Repentance keeps the heart sober and watchfull, and loth to hazard on sin, and withall makes sin bitter: But the *Antinomian* way takes off all restraints, and looeth the reins to sin; It's much now to see a penitent; I wish There may be much Repentance in secret; but for any thing that is seen, it's very rare. *Sixthly*, In an especiall manner, be much in Improving the strength of Jesus Christ, to prevent your *turning again to folly*; do not undertake nor engage in your own strength; but believingly lay all the weight and stresse on your Suretie, Put his name in the band, which ye give to God, for the debt of duty: *Abide in me, and I in you, So ye shall bring forth much fruit; for without me, ye can do nothing*; saith our Lord to his Disciples, *John 15.* But how many fail and come short here? While

they go about duties, and either quite misken or make but very litle use of Christ; many know very litle or nothing at all, what it is to make use of Christ, in order to the making of their peace with God; but O! how very few know what it is to make use of his strength to enable them for duty, & *to go through the wilderness leaning on their beloved.* *Serenthly*, Defer not to make your Resolutions and engagements practicable; There are many, a lace! who think Shame, it should be said, that a Sermon had so much weight with them, as to make them alter and change their course at once; It may be they will consent to be religious, but they must be allowed to come to it by degrees, & to creep toward it piece-meal; but beware of that, lest it prove in the Issue to be a shift of thy deceitfull heart; Ponder these words well, *Eccles. 5. Defer not to pay what thou hast vowed, for the Lord hath no Pleasure in fools*; And in the Holy Ghosts account, he is a fool that deferreth and putteth off one moment; O! delayes are in a speciall manner dangerous here, and Sathan will not faill to knit one delay to another. *Eightly*, Reject all Temptations to sin and *turning again to folly*, with abhorrency; say with *Ephraim*, *What have I any more to do with Idols?* Never think on them, but with indignation and Holy disdain; for ye are undone if ye but once listen to them. *Ninthly*, Be often examining, if ye be like and answerable to your Communicating, and to your Promises and engagements; many know not how it is with them, because they Examine not.

*Tenthly*



*Tenthly*, Walk humbly in the sense of your weakness, trust not to your own heart ; for he that doth so, is reputed to be a fool, by the Holy Ghost. *Eleventhly*, Be helping one another forward in your way to Heaven. *Take heed* (saith the Apostle. *Heb. 3. 12, 13.* *That there be not in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of Sin* : To be edifying to others would, through Gods blessing ; be edifying to your selves, and help you to be in good case ; to be praying with them would stir up your selves to more Seriousness in the exercise of that duty ; to be reproving sin in them, would waken up more hatred of it in your selves , and to be much Conversant in the duties of Mutual edification with them that are warm in their love to Christ , to his interests and friends , and diligent in the study of Holiness , would readily through Grace stir you up to seek after more love and more Holiness ; as he insinuates in that exhortation to the Christian *Hebrews* , Chap. 10. 24. *Let us consider one another , to provoke unto love and good works.* *Twelfthly*, And in a word, endeavour to walk suitably to your light ; your own consciences will readily tell you , that it's best to walk so, as ye may abstain from that which ye know to be sin , and to be doing and delighting in that which ye know to be duty ; There are very few , if any duties of Religion, but they are one time or another, and many of them frequently laid before you ; and not a few shall, I hope, have cause of blessing God eternally, that ever this Gospel-light was made to shine so clearly on them : but for such of you, *As detain the truth of God in unrighteousness* ( as the Apostle says, some do, *Rom. 1* ) or make a prisoner of it , by setting a guard of

corrupt affections about it ; *Whom God gave up to vile affections ; and to all sorts of most abominable filthiness , because , though they knew that such things ought not to have been done , yet they not only did , but took pleasure in them that did them : I leave it with all the seriousness I can win to , on you , and take Instruments of witness in your consciences , that ye have had great offers , and have made fair minis , and come under , at least , seeming engagements : if ye have not done so , declare so much , but since ye all professe that ye have engaged , and some have really engaged , not to turn again to folly ; walk suitably to your engagements , as ye would not have your consciences condemning you , and God who is greater then your Consciences to condemn you . Many , I fear , have sleeping consciences , and that will not now speak to them ; but the Conscience of every one will speak at length and not keep silence . We shall now say no more , but Pray that this word may be Blessed of God to you .*

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*These five following Sermons were all preached about the time of the Communion , the first four within a very few dayes before it , as it gradually approached ; the Fifth after it ,*

### On Jeremiah 50. vers. 4, 5.

*In those dayes , and in that time , saith the Lord , the Children of Israel shall come , they and the Children of Judah together , going and weeping : they shall go , and see the Lord their God .*

Vers. 5.



Vers. 5. *They shal ask the way to Zion with their faces thither-ward, Saying, come and let us Joyn our selves to the Lord, in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

## S E R M O N I.

**T**He repairing and making up of a breach betwixt God and a People, is a matter of greatest moment and Concern, and when men are serious in it, O how uptaking is it to them; Which is holden out to the life in these words; that lay forth before us very clearly the frame and carriage of a people, which formerly have dealt loosely and deceitfully in the matter of their Covenant with God, when they come through his Grace to be serious and in good earnest in the upmaking of it again.

As for the people spoken of here, they are *Israel* and *Judah*, the Lords own Covenanted People, who had dealt falsely and foully in the Covenant, and had thereby Procured sad strokes to themselves, and had divided and separated themselves from God, and one of them from another, Which division and separation continued lamentably long? They are both here represented as coming home together, Seriously endeavouring to amend and make up the breach betwixt God and them, and among themselves.

As for the time that this relates to (*In those dayes and in that time saith the Lord*) It looks, literally and according to the Cohesion, to *Babylons Destruction*, and ~~the~~ Lords bringing down that *Babylonish Monarchy* by the *Persian King Cyrus*; In which time the People of God had some liberty to return to their own land: Yet

considering the great scope of the Words, and that this liberty of the Jews is in a great part fulfilled in Christ; and that the union spoken of here is such as hath in it the gathering together of all the Tribes; and withall, that the Covenant which they enter into with the Lord Christ, is such as shall never be forgotten: We must extend the words to their Ingrafting again into their own Olive: when all Israel shall be saved, and they shall be grafted into their own root and Stock from off which they were broken. As for the Scope, it's partly to encourage the Jews; This being not only a Promise of their return, but also and mainly of their Repentance, and of their Friendship & Reconciliation with God and with one another; In these dayes they that had been far from him, and busie vexing one another, shall come, and come together: Their work and business in coming, is to seek the Lord; and the manner of it, is going and weeping: Praying and repenting: and although the way, be somewhat dark, and not so discernible to them: yet they go on, asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward: They ask how they may come to Him, worship God again aright and perform the duties of a people in-churched to, and in Covenant with him; And (as it were) from one Post or Town to another, they ask the way, and get Direction from one day to another, and from one duty to another: And their designe in all is, Come, say they on the matter, we were once in Covenant with God and with one another, but we have been unfaithfull in both, now let us amend and make up the breach in both: Let us Joyn our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten: Let us renew our Covenant with God, and let it be done firmly and surely, so as it may not be broken again: this looks and hath respect to Jeremiah 31. 31, &c. and 32. 49. 40. Where



40. Where the Lord Promiseth *To make a new Covenant with the House of Israel and with the house of Judah:* Cited by the Apostle, *Heb. 8.* And it's called *Chap. 32. An everlasting Covenant:* Which is not so much to be understood of meer externall Covenanting, as of saving sharing in and partaking of Christs Righteousness for the Pardon of sin: and of their engaging to God in his own strength to be forth-coming in the fruits of saving Grace and Holiness in their practice: This is in Sum, the way and course which they take; and is a short directory for what should be a peoples carriage, when they would make up the breach of a broken Covenant with God.

As for the Particular Scope of this place, as it relateth to *Israel and Judah*, their returning together, we shall not insist in it: yet from these words we may see. *First*, That There is good ground for us to expect the Lords bringing back his scattered People the Jews, and their ingraffing again into their own Olive: The same God that perswaded *Japhet* to dwell in the Tents of *Shem*, can perswade *Shem* to dwell in the tents of *Japhet*: As they minded us *Gentiles*, as a little Sister, and were Holily Solicitous what they might do for us, we ought in gratitude to mind them as the elder Sister, that they may turn again to the Lord: who hath given us his faithful Word for it, which cannot fail but must be fulfilled.

*Secondly*, We see, that Heart-melting towards God and seriousness to make up the breach of a broken Covenant betwixt a People and him, conduce nativly to make the hearts of those that have been divided and set at variance from one another, in much warmness of love to unite and sweetly to join together: It's from this, that *Israel and Judah* become one Stick in the Lords hand, *Ezek. 37.* This makes them as melted mettall to run close together,

together, as it were, into one Lump : though it was a long continued Schisme , and had much bitterness attending it : yet when their hearts are touched with a Sense of sin and of a broken Covenant , their former differences and animosities vanish : softness of heart in the sense of bygone sin , would silence many things among us ; that all disputings , writings and Printings will not be able to do : Pray for this to the Land, as the most effectually mean and way of curing our divisions , and of uniting us in the Lord : It Joins *Judah* and *Israel* together, whose breach was much greater, and of far longer continuance then ours.

Thirdly, We see here , that *A peoples joining and running together in serious seeking of the Lord is very Commendable and lovely, and a good token and evidence to them of their turning to God and of Gods accepting of them* : even as bitterness and division is exceeding displeasing to God and prejudiciall to themselves and to the Work of Grace in them : This is an happy-like, hopeful and promising day of Repentance and turning to God, that bodeeth much, unspeakably much good to a land and People.

But we come to consider the words as they do direct unto, and chalk out the way for a people returning, to make up a broken Covenant with God , which is the Scope. And we may take it up in these *Three, First* As it respects the frame of their hearts : And O what a tender, humble, warm and mournfull frame are they represented to be in ! *They shall come, and go together, exciting one another , going and weeping with their faces towards Zion.* Secondly, As it respects and holds forth the great designe they have , and that is , to renew and make sure the Covenant betwixt God & them : Though



it was now broken and they want no challenges for it : Yet they do not say , we will never enter in it again. Because we brake it the last time we made it : But come ( say they ) let us make it the more firm and stable. *Thirdly*, As it respects and hold out their posture, and the way which they take in pursuing this designe; There is a going and weeping, a praying to and seeking of the Lord ; in a word they seek , and endeavour to renew their Covenant with God, seriously, diligently and humbly ; and thus they pursue their designe.

*First* then , If we look to their frame , we will find implied in it, 1. A guilty condition. 2. A challenging and convinced condition. 3. A repenting condition ; they are kindly affected with the wrongs done to God, and desire and use means to have them righted.

We shall name *Two* or *Three* generall *Doctrines* from this *First* Consideration of the word , though in effect it will fall in with the *Last*. The *First* whereof is this, That Gods Covenanted People may deal foully and falsely in his Covenant ; For their coming to renew the Covenant supposeth that they had broken it ; and it's also implied in their mourning and weeping , and saying, Come and let us join our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten. This needs no further proof then the History of Gods People , their dealing with him ; which holds out clearly and convincingly the strong Propension and bent of heart that is naturally in them to back-slide , and like a deceitfull bow to turn aside and to prove unstedfast in his Covenant.

*Secondly*, There is here implied A distance betwixt God and them following on the breach of Covenant ; Their going to seek the Lord saith, that he is a seeking ; this is very sad, yet most true , that Sin and unfaithfull dealing in Gods Covenant will make a separation betwixt him

him and a People in Covenant with him : Thus it's said, *Isai. 59. 1. The Lords hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear ; but your iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God : It's very like, that many believe not this, that sin hath such influence in making separation betwixt God and sinners ; but in that day when an eternall separation shall be made betwixt God and them, It will be undenyably made known and manifest, when many of you that now throng to the Ordinances will, if Grace prevent not, meet with that sentence ( O dreadfull sentence ! ) depart from me ye workers of iniquitie, I never knew you.*

*Thirdly, There is here their sensibleness of both these, 1. That they had broken Covenant. 2. That God had separated himself and withdrawn his Presence from them for their breach of Covenant ; though sin be very evil, and the want of Gods Presence very sad ; yet they had this good, that they were kindly sensible of both : whence we may Observe, That Conviction of bygone wrongs done to God, and kindly resenting of his absence, are the first rises and springs of Repentance and turning to God ; or they are the first steps of Conversion : What is it, I pray, that all this business and stir among this People flows from ? Here it is, First, They apprehend a quarrell betwixt God and them, And next they apprehend a distance : & this puts them seriously to mind turning to God with weeping and supplications, and to renew their Covenant for recovering of Gods presence : this same is the Spirits Method, John 16 I will ( saith the Lord Christ ) send the spirit, and the first thing he doth is this ; He convinceth the world of sin : so Acts 2. 37. the first thing that ever ( to speak so ) turned the chafe in Peters hearers was, that they were pricked in their hearts for sin ; and this did put them to an advisement,*  
and



and to cry out, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* And indeed there is a necessitie of this, Considering the Lords way of administering his Grace; for so long as persons are not convinced of their sin, they are not apprehensive of a quarrell; but conviction of sin makes them apprehensive of it, and to think, that they would be obliged to aay who would relieve them out of that sad Condition: and while God is absent and not missed, they sleep on; and though he be absent, yet they know it not, as *Samson* knew not that God had left him, till he went out to shake himself: But when Gods departure becometh sensible, it will make a wicked *Saul* to howl; and will make a gracious tender Soul to take the Alarme hot: and we see, *Cant. 3. and 5.* Where the Bride missing Christ, is put to seeking, and still missing him, her heart is kepted fluttering and on wing in Pursuing after his presence, till she recover and find it.

As the Use of the Point, we would Exhort you to let this truth sink in your hearts: there is a necessity of the conviction of these Two, 1. Of wrongs done to God. 2. Of Gods absence, ere ye can be serious in the exercise of repentance and turning to God: what is the cause that many ly still in deep security with much debt upon their score, and ly down and rise up without Gods company? Even this, that they never had it, and were never troubled for the want of it; they were never convinced and made sensible of their Sin: now this conviction is not, simply to know that we have sin, as many take it to be, who think it enough that they know that they are sinners: but it's such a Conviction as arrests the sinner before God, and puts him to answer for his Sin: It's like an officer coming with an order to put a man in Prison for debt: he may go confidently and slowly enough up and down the street under the knowledge

ledge of his debt : But when He is arrested for it by the officer, it affects him, and toucheth him in the quick : so is it with a Soul thoroughly convinced of sin : Men may know that they are sinners, but the Conscience for a time may, not much trouble them, and they may take on more to a long day, and shift challenges and Convictions : but when the Conscience awaketh and the law arresteth them, the matter sinks deeper on them : would ye then know what is a suitable frame for Fasting and Communicating ? We would Commend this to you, even to Study a thoroughness of the Conviction of sin, and to be sensible of the distance that is betwixt God and you, and narrowly to observe whether he be present or absent : It's very sad and much to be Lamented, that many who are ignorant of the way of God should be so strongly perswaded of the goodness of their Condition, that there is no access for any word so much as once to bear upon them : If we should ask many of you, whether are ye thoroughly convinced of your wrongs done to God, and sensible of the distance betwixt him and you ? ye would readily answer, that ye never wanted nor missed him : he hath been always your God, and ye have been always his people : not from any strength of Faith, but from ignorance, stupidity and carnall Presumption ; yea many of you have not so much knowledge as to cover your ignorance and Hypocrisie, neither can any gain the least ground of you, to make you sensible that your faith and Communion with God are unsound and delusory, because they have not had a right rise from conviction of sin and of distance from God, putting you on to repentance and covenanting with him. But because severall persons will be ready to think and say, that they have convictions of sin : as indeed there is much ground and reason for them : I shall point at some convictions,



convictions, for which there is Just ground, and where-  
by ye may know if your Convictions have been thorow  
and sound: most whereof, if not all of them may be  
gathered from the words. 1. There is a Conviction of  
the want of Faith: The holy Spirits first work, *John 16.*  
*9. Is to convince the world of sin, because they believe not*  
*on him:* Were ye ever convinced of your unbelief: Many  
will be convinced of Sabbath-breaking, of cursing,  
Swearing, lying, Drunkenness, &c. to be sins, who  
were never convinced of the sin of their want of Faith,  
for they always had it, as they think: and what, I pray,  
can such as ye do at a fast or humiliation for sin, when  
this is your great sin, and ye cannot by any means be  
brought to take with it, though you take with other  
sins; but can come boldly to the Table of the Lord as  
Believers, and such as have no just reason to doubt of  
the soundness of your Faith, while in the mean time, all  
the Faith that ye have, is but rotten presumption: This  
is a most fearfull condition: for so long as ye think that  
ye have Faith, ye cannot think your selves to be lost:  
neither can ye cast your selves down with a stopped  
mouth before God: nor is there access for any word  
from him to do you good. A 2d. Conviction or chal-  
lenge is of or for the want of a new nature? were ye  
ever convinced of this? not only, of this and that and  
the other particular sin, but that ye were in a sinfull and  
unrenewed state? *Nicodemus John 3.* comes to Christ  
and speaks him fair; but the Lord lets him know that  
fair words, a great Profession, and some, yea much  
knowledge will not do the turn, he must necessarily  
have somewhat else, even a new nature, *He must be*  
*born again, else he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Hea-*  
*ven:* He is very unwilling and loth to digest that Doct-  
rine; but the Lord tells him, that, *that which is born*  
of

*of the flesh is flesh* : It were good that many of you had that word from your heart in your Mouth, which is *Jer. 31. 18. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned* : Convictions of a naturall state, Alace ! are very rare ; If any of you have had such Convictions, try what became of them, and what followed on them. A *Third* Conviction or challenge is, of or for former breaches of Covenant, For Gospel-fins and the sin of dealing unfaithfully in Gods Covenant : and can any of you shift this Challenge, considering what ye were tyed to in Baptisme, and by other vows and engagements which ye have come under since that time, especially at the Lords Supper ? How few of those have been kept ? or rather have they not been as so many ropes of Sand ? And who are suitably challenged for and convinced of such breaches, as it is implied here, that these People are ? A *Fourth* Conviction is, of the want of Gods presence, insinuated in their *Going to seek the Lord*, which imports an absence of God, and that sinfully procured by them, for which they weep and are kindly affected : the absence of God simply considered is no ground of challenge, it being an act of Sovereignty ; but absence procured through our sin is a great ground of challenge : Alace ! the most part know not, neither are acquainted with any such Challenge : they think God is always with them : However, the Lord is absent, and it would well become us to search out diligently that which hath procured his absence ; for whatever may be Gods end in it, there is abundant ground of Just challenge that we may get against our selves in it. A *Fifth* Ground of challenge is, in respect of their own *stupidity* and ignorance, which have incapacitated them to take up the way how to come to God for making up the breach, therefore *They ask the way to Zion* : And this may be another sad challenge to many :



many : who though their ignorance , senselesse and stupidity have utterly indisposed and unfitted themselves to make their peace with God , and are without knowledge of the way how to vent their desires to him. A *Sixth* Challenge implied is , the want of love to one another , and a Challenge for seen distance betwixt God and them helps to bear in on them this Challenge for distance betwixt one another : Therefore now they say , *Come and let us join our selves* : this is another challenge , which we should not shift : it is too evident , what ever our professions be , that we are much cooled and fallen behind in our Love to one another. A *Seventh* Challenge is , lying long under a seen evil condition without being suitably affected with it : therefore these People go now with the more tenderness about the work of turning to God , and of their renewing Covenant with him , that they were so long a falling to it : I suppose many of you , who never knew what Repentance was , and others also who have been more serious then now they are , may have this challenge : It is no Strange nor uncouth thing that is called for from us , to fit and prepare us for Fasts and Communions , it is even seriousness in these most plain , Common and Obvious things : and if ye can hold up your faces and say , that these concern you not nor the Present occasion , ye may wave and lay them aside : but if they be such things as your Consciences convince you of : it is most necessarie , that ye take time to think upon them and lay them to Heart : and that ye study through Grace to be Humbled for them before the Lord.

But the *Observation* , that we intended mainly to speak a word to at this time , is this , that *There is no amending or righting of an ill condition , but by making*  
sure

sure and fast the Covenant betwixt God and us. What is the remedie of this Peoples ill condition here, when they find themselves so far wrong? Come (say they) and let us join our selves to the Lord in a Perpetuall Covenant, never to be forgotten: when I speak here of Covenanting, as that on which the quieting of our Consciences, and the remedie of things wrong in our Condition doth so much depend: It is not to be understood of a bare Promise only to right and amend things that are wrong and amiss; but it is to be understood of a reall Covenanting with God, of a reall and cordiall accepting of the offer of Jesus Christ made to us in the Gospel, whereby an union betwixt God and us through him as Mediator is made up: wherein there is Gods offer and Promise, on the one side: and our Faith accepting of and submitting to the terms and Conditions on which the offer is made, on the other side: whereupon there followeth a mutuall closed bargain betwixt God and us: or the very bargain is thus made up: And so, whatever way we look upon and consider our condition as evil or sad, whether in respect of challenges for and convictions of sin and of wrongs done to God: or in respect of darkness, uncleanness & confusion: or in respect of Crosses and afflictions, this is the way to win at the remedy thereof: thus David, 2 Sam. 23 5. When he is drawing near to Death, and hath many challenges for things that had been wrong in his Personall walk and in his house, which had brought on it much affliction and trouble, and when he finds himself very infirm, and under the want of much of that lively sense he had wont to have, he betakes himself to this, *Though* (saith he) *My house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant ordered in all things and sure and this is all my Salvation and all my desire, though I* make



*make it not to grow*: And if we look on the Prodigal, *Luke 15*. When he is under a conviction of his Sin and misery, what resolves he upon as a remedy? *I will go (saith he) to my Father, and I will say; Father, I have sinned, &c.* The first thing he betakes himself to and resolves upon, is, to catch hold of the Covenant relation betwixt his Father and him. And there is a necessity of this on a *Threesfold* account, 1. Because there can be no solid ground for extricating and bringing one out of an evil condition, but by Covenanting with God; for what else, I pray, can silence a challenge, or quiet and calme the Conscience in respect of guilt, when it saith to the person, thou hast sinned and art liable to the Curse? There is no way to get sin and the Curse removed, but by fleeing to Jesus Christ, and closing with Gods offer of Pardon upon the account of His Satisfaction rested on by Faith: Therefore is faith compared to a shield, whereby we may quench the fierie darts of the devil; It's true, saith the Soul accused of enmitie against and wrongs done to God, I was an enemy to him and greatly wronged him, I was liable to his curse and wrath for sin; but he offered me Pardon and reconciliation through the Mediator, and I have accepted of his offer, and do rest upon Christs satisfaction for pardon, therefore I am Justified and shall not come into condemnation. 2. Because there can be no peace to the Soul, till there be some thorow evidence that the Covenant is fixed and made sure; for this is the way that God hath laid down for making Peace; as the quarrell and curse are founded on the breach of one Covenant, so our peace ariseth upon our engaging with God in another Covenant: Hence are all those promises, *Jer. 30. 31, 32, 33.* and *Heb. 8.* which are so often repeated, *I will Pardon their iniquities, I will remember their*

their sins no more, &c. All which Promises being privileges of a Covenant with God, whoever would look for the Performance of the Promises, there is a necessitie of their being in Covenant with him, ere they can expect the performance of them and attain to Peace.

3. Because, all that are without the Covenant of Grace are under the curse, being lyable to the breach of the first Covenant: Therefore *Ephes. 2.* These two are put together, *Strangers from the Covenant of Promise; and having no Hope, being without God and Christ in the World;* and so to be without the Covenant, is to be without Hope, and without God and without Christ.

use, 1. Lay this for an unquestionable ground, that if ever ye be well, it must be by this Covenant with God: is there any conviction of sin, of violating bygone engagements to God, and of wrongs done to him? take it for a certain truth, that things must be thus adjusted and thus secured betwixt God and you; that ye must have pardon & peace by entring into, & making sure the new Covenant with God on the Grounds of his own grace; That is, when God is treating with you & declaring that he is content to close with you, on Condition, that ye will take with your sin, renounce your own righteousness and submit to Christs, and be content to live to him all the days of your life that are behind; step to & close with him on his own terms: for the hearts yeelding its consent to God, is the making of the Covenant; & that intitleth to all the good that is in the Bible; In Sum it's this, if ye, (saith the Lord) accept of my offering my self to be your God, and consent to give up yourselves to me, if ye will quit your own righteousness and embrace Christs, I will Pardon your sin, I will be forth-coming to you for happiness, and will sanctify



you and make you fit to be Partakers of it ; and your making of the Covenant sure , is your yeelding to be happie on these termes , even to be content to take Justification & Pardon of sin freely by vertue of Christs satisfaction, and to give up your selves to be his, to be for him and to live to him and not to your selves ; as ye get God engaged to be yours, so ye engage and subscribe to be Gods , and to walk suitably , according to your engagement , in his strength , to be for him and for no other, as the word is, *Hos. 3.* or as it is, *Isaiah 44. 5.* One shall say , *I am the Lords*, and another shall call himself by the name of *Jacob* , and another shal subscribe with his hand unto the Lord and surname himself by the name of *Israel* ; He shall , as it were , write down his Name , *I am Gods* : This , in short , is Covenanted with God ; which may be done in hearing the word, in Praying, in meditating, and in Communicating ; when Faith is distinctly, at least, really and truly exercised on Gods offer and Promise ; and when upon deliberation, there is a sincere resolving with the persons self, *I will take God as he offers himself to me* , and will give up and away my self to him : and when , according to the resolution, there is actually a yeelding to God.

*Use Second*, Seeing this is the only way to right and unravel an evil and ravelled condition , let me Exhort you to pitch on this as your great work , and to aim at it as your great scope , these days that are before you ; that a good understanding may be begotten betwixt God and you, and all quarrels removed and taken away, by declaring and acknowledging your iniquities before him, and by Covenanted with him on his own terms ; This would make much kindly heart-melting , and would make the Communion to be cheering and refreshfull ,

refreshful ; when after a secretly closed bargain with God, we should come to receive his Seal, and to append and put to ours : and whatever tossings and difficulties there may be to get our selves made right here, yet we would seriously endeavour to get our hearts brought up sincerely to say with the Psalmist, *Psalm. 16. My Soul hath said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord :* And to win at a settled deliberat yeelding to God, so as there may be quietness in it for the time to come.

*Use Third,* There is here sad ground of *Expostulation* with and *Reproof* to many : I know not what many of you are doing : most part, I suppose, are taken up about the outward ordinances : but as to the main thing of making up a Covenant with God, as it is holden forth in the Gospel, I fear, that is much neglected and misken'd : yet let me say it, though ye should Pray and weep all these dayes, without this it is impossible that ye can have Peace, or win to have a good understanding betwixt God and you : Put your selves therefore to the tryall, and see if the frame of your Spirits be such as holds any tolerable Proportion to the frame and posture that *Israel* and *Judah* are represented to be in here : they are going, we are sitting still : they are weeping, our eyes are dry and our hearts hard : the humble mournfull way of Religion, Alace ! is much gone from amongst us : again, they are renewing the Covenant : but Ah ! what can we say, as to the securing of things betwixt God and us ? Are not the most part, as well satisfied with their state and Condition, as if there were nothing wrong nor amisse in it ? Alace ! shall we stubber and scurf over Religion, and vaile our selves from our selves and from others, when in the mean time our hearts and Consciences might, if awake, tell us that we  
are



are not in Covenant with God? I know, many of you will be ready to say, ye are friends with God: but let me ask such, did ye ever know and believe the enmity? did ye ever apprehend your selves to be strangers to God and without the Covenant? Did ye ever experimentally know any good that his word did to you, as to the bringing of you under the bond of the Covenant? Hath any gracious Change followed upon it? The truth is, many of you think that ye may go to Heaven without the word, and the saving effects of it on your hearts: ye found them (as ye fancy) always inclined to love God: ye suppose that ye were alwayes in friendship with him: which, though there were nothing else to prove it, is a manifest evidence, that ye were never really in friendship with him. But let me ask yet further, did ye ever know what it was, to make use of Christs mediation, in the making up of a Covenant betwixt God and you? It's like, ye will say, ye prayed: but ye might have done that, though Christ had never come into the World, and though there had been no ground for your acceptance on his account: but I say again, what use made ye of his mediation and sufferings? I fear ye know little or nothing at all of this; but ye come to him, because ye imagine that he bears a goodwill to all sinners, and is very easie to be dealt with, and that God the Father is more inexorable and a harder partie to deal with then he; as if Jesus Christ the Son were not as Just as the Father; Or as if God the Father were not as ready, through a mediator, to accept of sinners, as the Son is: I would ask you yet further, do ye think, or can ye with any Just reason think, that your Covenant is sure, when ye know neither what it is, nor how ye have entered into it? In the Covenant, as there is an offer on Gods side, so there must be a receiving

receiving on yours; though I grant that oftentimes this, to serious Souls will be unclear, and it will be their burden that they have not strong enough desires to have it thorough and clear; such Poor Souls would prefer their darkness, unbelief and undexterousness in Christ's hand to be helped. But it's a sad matter, that when we should be praying you to close with Christ in the Covenant? I must be our work, and the hardest peece of it to shake many of you out of your presumption: It's no pleasure to us, God knoweth, to preach you out of the Covenant; but your Presumption Layeth a necessity on us, to lance you to the quick and to search down to the bottom of your sores; because these must be discovered and laid open, before there can be any ground for the application of consolation: if once we could get you brought under a thorough conviction, that ye have been deluding your selves, we might yet have sweet, lively, comfortable and refreshfull sayes: if ye were in this Posture, *Going and weeping for perverting your wayes, with your faces towards Zion, towards God through the Mediator*; ye might expect Gods blessing on these Solemne Ordinances, and that there should be a Covenant made up with him *never to be forgotten*. **C**ome be Serious in the business, and let not this opportunity go by you unimproved to the best & utmost advantage and himself graciously help you hereunto.



## Jeremiah 50. Vers. 4. 5.

*In those dayes, and In that time, saith the Lord the Children of Israel shall come, they and the Children of Judah together, going & weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God.*

*Verl. 5. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thither-ward, Saying, come, and let us Joyn our selves to the Lord, in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

## S E R M O N II.

**C**Ovenanting with God, if it be real, well grounded and sure, is a business of incomparably greatest concern and advantage to sinners; but when it is otherwise, and only Imagined without any Solid ground; it's attended with the greatest disapointment and Prejudice imaginable; a man in that case fancieth himself to be in a state of Friendship and favour with God, while, in the meantime, he is an enemy to God, and God an enemy to him; and is there any disappointment or disadvantage in the world comparable to that? It is one great end and designe of all Ordinances, that strangers to God by nature may be engaged to him, and made to become his Covenanted People; It was for this end that Christ came into the world and laid down His life and shed his precious Blood, even to bring Sinners  
K into

into a Covenant of Reconciliation and friendship with God; and therefore the Ordinance, that is now approaching, is called the new *Covenant*, or *New Testament in his Blood*.

The words have in them a short and sweet sum & compend of the gracious frame of a People, turning home to God, to get a broken Covenant made up: *Israel* and *Judah* having deeply declined from the blessed state and condition wherein God had once graciously put them; Their return and Repentance is here both Prophesied of and promised; and this is the great thing which they designe in their Returning, Even to get the knot (to lay so) of the *Covenant* betwixt God and them made fast and sure, so as they may never any more be separated from him.

We shall at this time shortly name some general *Observations* from the words: The First whereof is this, that *There is nothin, that People, who have any Convictions of their sin and of their distance from God, should more singly aim at and Seriously seek after, then to be firmly joined to the Lord in Covenant, or to be in good terms with him according to his Covenant*; For these come to the same amount, to be in good terms with God, to be *Reconciled* to God, and to be in *Covenant* with God, by the one we come to the other this: we say, should be aimed at & sought after by all that are naturally born enemies to God, *Aliens and Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, without Hope, and without God in the World, Ephes. 2. 12*  
Compare



Compared with vers. 1. 2, 3. where *to be dead in sins and trespases*, is expounded, to be *Without the Covenant*: But more especially those who are touched with the sense of their sin, should have this for their aim, designe and endeavour; as we see in these spoken of here, who when they come to any sense of their sin; this is clearly their great designe and work verie seriously and closely pursued by them.

To clear and Confirm it, take these *Three* words, Consider; *First*, What state and Condition man naturally is in. *Secondly*, What God is to man in reference to that estate; And *Thirdly*, What Covenanting with God is: and we will find that there is nothing which he should more seriously designe and seek after. *First*, Man is naturally an enemy to God, and in respect of his malicious desperat inclination, given to thwart with God, whereby God stands as an enemy to him; he is liable to the curse of God, and God is as an armed man against him, as *Job* speaks; and he like an unarmed Child running on the bosses of his Buckler. *Secondly*, Consider that God is not only an enemy, but stands stated as such with his Curse against sinners according to that word, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the Law to do them*; and this Curse is like the flaming Sword in the hand of the *Cherubims*, which with terrour separat betwixt God and the sinner, So that there is no access for him to God; and if he have any thoughts of God, he is troubled with them; and all the Creatures are armed against him, So that he can expect nothing

but enmity from every stone of the field. *Third* Consider, that Covenancing with God is that, whereby a man who is naturally at enmity with God cometh to be in friendship with him and hath the face of every thing altered; the meditation of God is sweet to him; the creatures are in league with him; The Angels become Ministering Spirits to him; Gods dispensations become lovely and do work together for his good, even those that are in themselves most terrible; Death and the Grave become servants to him; and being in Covenant with God he can triumph over them and all troubles and persecutions, and say that he is *More then Conqueror then all*, as it is *Rom. 8.* and saith the Apostle to such, *1 Cor. 3. All things are yours, whether Paul or Apol'o, or Cephas, or Life, or Death, things present or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christs.* Is it any wonder then, that a Poor Soul touched with the sense of sin be desirous and Solicitous to be in Covenant with God? And therefore, whether we look upon it as a dutie, or as an evidence of a person truly humbled for sin, it is very desirable and should be seriously sought after.

The *Use* Serves to show, That the great Scope which ye should now have before you, is to have a broken Covenant made up with God; It should be your main designe to put this grand business to a point, that there may be no war, but a standing League betwixt God and you: And therefore, whoever they be that satisfie themselves with going about the Ordinances & misken this, they certainly  
mistake



bird mistake the mark ; The great matter is not to come to  
 where the Communion, neither is it to win at somewhat of  
 heart softness, or to a little sense, which are good ; but  
 e fa's really to be in Covenant with God ; to be able to  
 God y on good ground, *The Lord is my God : My beloved*  
 mine and I am his ; And when he saith, *Return back-*  
 ding Children , to be in case to answer with the heart ;  
 ; behold we come unto thee ; for thou art the Lord our God ;  
 rk t his is indeed a desirable thing ; and he is an unhappie  
 hen an that doth not, that will not heartily desire and seek  
 com fer it.

God Secondly, From their very great Seriousness in going,  
 l pe and weeping, in going to seek the Lord, asking the  
 ror way to Zion, and from their encouraging one another  
 le to Join in Coyenant with the Lord, Observe, that where  
 Pau there is any Sincerity or begun work of Grace, it shews  
 esen self in nothing sooner, then in an impulse to be at Co-  
 rists venanting with God and to have some clearness therein ;  
 che For, only to be in Covenant, and not to have the know-  
 to b ledge of it, cannot give that peace and comfort which a  
 ethe present sad exercise calleth for : therefore, say they, while  
 of they are going and weeping, Come and let us join our  
 and selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, that shal not  
 be forgotten : So then, we say, that a sincere and graci-  
 bus work of God appears in nothing sooner, then in  
 rop this impulse to have the Covenant of God fixed and put  
 ve out of doubt ; to have this at a Point is their great de-  
 d be signe here, and they are very serious in it ; So *Isaiah.*  
 o 44. where vers. 3. There is a Promise of the work of  
 ling the Spirit in Sanctifieing ; and how is this work of the  
 who Spirit proved ? or, wherein doth it appear ? Even thus  
 g a vers. 5. One shal say I am the Lords, and another shall  
 nly call himself by the Name of Jacob, and another shall sub-  
 tak scribe with his hand unto the Lord, and sur-name himself

by the name of Israel; the work of Gods Spirit, when he comes to Sanctifie and save, is such as makes a man run and devote himself to God with hand, heart and mouth, ye never saw people more quickly and with better will come to the Church at the most Solemn occasion; then (when this work is begun, or there is any kindly exercise about it) serious Souls will be ready to run with their heart to Subscribe to Gods Covenant, when the Terms of it are laid out before them. Only advert to these Two things in this Observation. First, When I speak of entering in Covenant with God I mean of the hearts closing with him by Faith, according as he offers himself in this Gospel; when he saith quit and renounce your own righteousness and take mine; quit and abandon your lusts and Idols and give yourselves to me, and I will be your God and be for you in all things that concern your happiness here and hereafter: the heart yeelds and says, contented Lord, the offer is good, and I accept of it; and as wives were wont (as it is yet the custom,) to surname themselves by their husbands, so doth the Soul, upon the matter, in this Covenant: Subscribe, I am Gods. This is called a yeelding to God, or the giving of a hand to him, 2 Chron. 30. 8. and Rom. 10. 3. It is also called *A submitting to the righteousness of God.* Secondly, When we speak of this impulse towards, or desire of Covenanting with God, It's not to be understood as every raw wish, such as *Balaam* had to be in Heaven but it is a seriously urging impulse, an earnest hunger and thirst and an ardent longing to have this at a point. It's such a thirsting desire, as all the world beside will not be able to quench: It makes the Soul eager in the pursuit of the thing, even to meet and close with God in the Covenant: It's in effect, that which, *Matth. 5. 1*



is called a *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*: Because it hath in it a fixed longing with Holy Pain: which *Cant. 5. 8.* Is called a being *sick of Love*: It's such a desire as makes the heart even faint and sick for the want of the thing desired, which can be satisfied with nothing else: no more then a very hungry man can be satisfied, if handfuls of Gold were offered to him, it's meat he must have. In this respect (which will be the Reason of the *Doctrine*) Christ Jesus is called the food of the Soul, and the Covenant is like the Pap, whereby Christs fulness is Communicated and conveyed to us: for we have no access to Christ but by the Covenant: therefore, *Ephes. 2. 12.* These two are put together, being *without Christ*, and being *without the Covenant*: and *Isaiah 66. 11, 12.* Converts are said to *Suck and be satisfied with the Breasts of the Churches Consolation* and to be *dandled on her knees*: Believers are like new-born Babes, whom nothing can satisfie or do good to but the Breasts: and the Ordinances are, as it were, the breasts at which they suck, and which are as so many Pipes to conveigh to them Spirituall nourishment: to which the Apostle alludeth, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* when he saith, *As new born Babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is Gracious*: and then follows, *to whom coming as unto a living stone, &c.* Jesus Christ is the milk, and the word the Pap that conveighs him: and as the first thing that evidenceth life to be in a new-born Babe, is hunger after the breast, so is it here, the Covenant satisfies the new born *New creature*.

The Use of the Point serves to put you to look back, and to consider, whether ever ye have in your experience known this, wherein spirituall life shews it self, Even to

be holily fond ( or browden so to speak ) on the Pap  
the Regenerat Soul cannot endure to be keeped back  
from sucking the breasts of these Consolations that are  
in the Covenant : Now it's very Probable that many  
will catch at this , as a very Comfortable Mark of Re-  
generation to themselves, and will be ready to say, why  
have we not this desire to be in Covenant with God  
And if that will be a proof of a work of grace, we want  
it not ; and these *Jewes* hear spoken of, before their  
coming to be in this blessed Frame , were ready to  
boast : hat they were *Abrahams* Children, and that they  
had a desire to be in Covenant with God : but it will be  
another sort of desire and eagernes which they will  
have, *When the Redeemer comes out of Zion to turn away*  
*iniquitie from Jacob.* But that ye may know , what this  
desire and impulse that we speak of is, and if indeed ye  
have it, consider these evidences of it ; *First*, That it is  
an ardent and vehement desire , a pressingly urgent im-  
pulse. not such as ye have had all your dayes ; but it is  
an effect of the Spirits out-pouring , as that *Paralel*  
place with this , viz. *Zech. 12. 10.* clears : *I will*  
*( saith the Lord ) Pour upon the house of David the*  
*Spirit of Grace, &c.* Away with that Grace, with that  
Faith and Love which are as old as your selves. *Second-*  
*ly*, This desire and Impulse hath such a vehemencie  
with it as puts the man to his feet , to go and Pray and  
to go weeping : It stirreth him then so, as he must needs  
go, though he be much in the Dark , and knows not  
so well and distinctly whither he is going : because  
Love to be in Covenant with God , will in a manner  
make a fool go right to God : though there is reason  
that he should seek after help to his infirmities : the de-  
sires of many are like the sluggards desire , who lyeth  
still on his bed , and his ease slays him : This desire  
maketh



maketh some Holy stir, and rouseth to diligence in the use of means. *Thirdly*, This desire is such, as never dies out, till the Person be thorow in the point of Covenanting with God: and therefore, though he should be put as it were to digg wells in the wilderness, and to go from strength to strength, yet he will adventure on it and hold on in his way: The Apostle, *Philip. 3.* Speaks of it as his *One Thing*, and when persons are suitably serious in this, it is their one thing, and not a peece of work only on the by: and if they may come to it in all their lifetime, they think (as they have reason to do) that they make a good bargain: and have gained a noble Prize: never did a man on Horse back, in a race, spur faster then they do, that by any means they may attain it. *Fourthly*, The principle of desire after Covenanting with God holds them constantly in an estimation of, and sucking at it as the mean of their life; as the Babe cannot live without the breasts, So they cannot live without the Covenant; they cannot rest but in it: I speak not now what Believers are in their declining: but when they are in a right Frame, they have no being but in this Covenant; they must needs have milk flowing through the Breasts of it for their nourishment; that is a cursed life or rather death of persons, who come to the word, and care not whether it be made lively or not, and come to the Communion and care not whether they get by it any life and comfort or not: and a cursed Faith that keeps Souls from making use of Christ: and such is the faith of many hearers of the Gospel: Now Covenanting is the Believers Earnest, and they are thereby made to forget their Fathers house, in hope to be admitted to dwell with Christ for evermore.

*Thirdly Observe*, that *A well qualified desire of Covenanting with God is a good token of Conversion; or a*

rightly byassed desire of being in Covenant with God the language of Persons coming home to God: Come (they) and let us join our selves to the Lord in a perperuall Covenant: The Lord se's down this as their commendation, and as an evidence of his begun Grace work in them; They, no doubt, had words of Covenanting before: but wanted this right impulse and fire, and therefore Sat still, but now they are much affected, stirred and put to their feet; It being an effect of the Poured out Spirit on them. We say, this is good token of a begun work of Grace, and of perfecting their coming home to God: because this impulse towards, and desire of Covenanting with God speaks of these three. *First*, The sense of their need of him and that they cannot live without him; and the stopping their Mouth with Holy shame and confusion before God. *Secondly*, An high estimation that they have of him, a Judging that they have no happiness but in him. *Thirdly*, It speaks out faith, in their actuall betaking of themselves to him for the up making of what they want and stand in need of: There is some what of all these in the Prodigal, who when he came to himself reckons thus with himself, 1. *I perish for hunger*, this Points at the sense of his need. 2. *There is Bread enough in my Fathers house and to spare*, which shews his Believing esteem of the fulness of God for a supply of his need, and for making him a Poor Miserable Perishing wretch compleatly happy. 3. *His resolution is, I will go and say, Father, &c.* This holds out his actuall purpose of Covenanting with God, which hath always faith in it: It is the same on the matter with this, *Come and let us join our selves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant.*



The Use of it serveth to shew, what a serious or well qualified desire after Covenanting with God is, and wherein it consists: and those things that are marks of it, may also serve for *Directions* how to go about it aright. *First*, This Well qualified or serious desire of Covenanting with God floweth from a *two fold* Conviction, 1. From a conviction of Peoples sin and breach of Covenant formerly, and of their distance from God: whereof we spake somewhat the Last day: we are afraid that many of you think you desire, when yet ye never knew aright your guilt in breaking Covenant, nor took up aright the distance betwixt God and you: It's one sort of desire that a whole man hath to speak with the Physician, and another which a sick man hath: it is of the latter that we mean here. *Secondly*, From a Conviction of the want of Gods Company: These here know now, though they be *Abrahams* seed, that yet they are nevertheless naturally enemies to God and Christ and without both, and therefore they seek him, and to make a Covenant with him. There are some that pretend to be seeking God and Christ, and yet they have him, they think, always in their hearts: But speak soberly, did ye ever want or miss him? It may be, at the one word ye will say, we hope not, and at the next word, Perhaps, too often: and it is still but a guessing at the best: when the *Prodigall* came to himself, he saw that he had been (to speak so) in the wrong close. *Secondly*, This well qualified desire hath a kindly heart softness with it, which is a good, though a very rare thing: They go here weeping, and when they are saying these words, *Come and let us join to the Lord in Covenant*, their tears are trickling down: It's a good and hopeful desire, which is expressed with the tear in the eye: proceeding from a suitably affected heart: There

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are Alace! many of our desires that do not kindly affect, neither do they make any change: the heart remaineth dead, stiff and hard under them. *Thirdly*, This well qualified desire puts on to diligence, and is not like the sluggards desire: therefore *they go and seek the Lord*: they are eager and earnest in the matter and are taken up with it: This desire will make the man sometimes forget to eat his bread and it may be to Pray seven times a day (what if I had said twice seven times?) and very oft to withdraw from all company, at least, that is not edifying and profitable, and to retire to the fields or to the Chamber, quietly to lay, as it were, a chase by the pursuit of Faith to the finding out of Gods Company: It will make him and her go to the poorest body in all the town or village, that is gracious, to ask the way to Zion: this is also a very rare thing: ye all know the way to Heaven, as ye think, and this makes you foolishly confident, till ye run your selves into the mire and into the pit at last, if Grace, by making a saving change, prevent not. *Fourthly*, This well qualified desire is a humbling desire, there is no pleading here with God, of the privilege of their Relation they have to *Abraham*, and to the Covenant made with him: they cannot find in their hearts, nor have they confidence to do that: they Judge themselves to be very unlike him, and they carry humbly towards one another, glad to ask the way at, and to get some knowledge of it from one another, how they may win forward: they are like the Spouse, who saith to the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, Cant. 5. *If ye see my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of Love*, take my Commendations (as if she had said) to him and lay out my case before him: such serious and humble Souls will be glad to take help in the way from any body that can give it, which saith, that they  
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are diligent and Painfull. *Fifthly*, This desire, as it may, is always setting forward; *they are going and asking the way*; and though they have a strong tide (as it were) against them, yet the wind of their own desire and impulse steereth them through and maketh them Stem the Port; and though they make but slow progress, yet it is always towards Zion. *Sixthly*, This desire is a Peremptory and (to say so) an illimited desire, and that in a twofold respect, 1. In respect of coming at God, It must have him and will not submit to the want of him, Communion with him it must have: 2. In this respect, that it maketh no Conditions with God of its own, but is heartily well content to take him on his own terms: This indeed is a notably good mark of a well qualified desire, when a Soul desires not so much to be at Heaven as to be at God, and when it is (as I Just now said) content to take him on his own terms: many will desire God and Heaven, but with some such secret reservation as this, that they get leave to brook their lusts and Idols, that they may have liberty to tittle and trifle away their time, to take their fill of the World, to be in credit and reputation and to pursue after some one thing or other in the World; or at least they must be allowed to go about the establishing of their own righteousness: but this desire is waited with the abandoning of all Idols, without any allowed exception or reservation, and with the rencouncing of self-righteousness also in the Point of Justification; and therefore it's called, *Submitting to the Righteousness of God*; It says not a word against the terms of the Covenant, but holds all: these things were good to be seriously thought on, and sought after, in our approaching to the Table of the Lord, to renew our Covenant with him; and where they are not in some measure, our desires

desires will not be found to be of the light kind; it were therefore very suitable for you, to think, how ye may get your hearts quickened and warmed with vehement and unquenchable desires after this covenanting with God, and after the water of life; O! know ye any thing of this? There are some who have found it in experience and who can represent it better to themselves than we can express it; ye who have had your hearts panting for God, for the living God, as David saith, his heart did, *Psal. 42*. Can tell what raw wishes were before, and that the Grace of God works such desires as have another sort of edge on them, and have a holily disquieting and restless hunger for the breasts of Gods Covenant, and cannot rest nor be satisfied, yea no not live without them.

*Fourthly Observe, That A people or person may have some sincere desires after Covenanting with God, and yet have much weakness, many infirmities and fears in the accomplishing of that their designe. Many poor puzzled and perplexed souls may have this honest desire, and yet not know well how to put the thing in Practice; even like unto these mentioned here, who are going toward Zion to join themselves to the Lord in Covenant, and yet are asking the way: they have covenanting with God in their eye as their great scope, but are ignorant in a Considerable measure of the way; yet they sit not still till they get the way (as it were) described on a Card to them: but they rise and make forward as they may. I nothing doubt, the truth of this Doctrine is known in experience by some Serious, though much tossed and puzzled Souls, who have some honest and earnest longings after him and after Covenanting with him: who yet know not well how to win at him, or how*



how to make this Covenanting Practicable: thus the honest well meaning Daughters of *Jerusalem* ask the Spouse, *Cant. 6. Whither is thy beloved gone, that we may see him with thee?* There was a sincere desire after him and a fixed Purpose to be at him, and to decline no Labour nor pains in order to coming by him: yet they know not well whither to go for finding of him: even like honest *Mary*, who *John 21.* would fain have Christ, and comes to the grave to seek him, and missing him weeps; and when the Angels speak to her to comfort her, that will not do it: She continues still weeping, and tells the cause: *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him:* It was an evidence of the honesty of her desire, that though she knew not where he was: yet she could not be diverted by any thing from a mournfull restless and diligent Pursuit after his presence. This may Proceed Partly, in the *First Place*, from believers their infirmity, and their not being thorough in the knowledge of Gospel Mysteries: from their ignorance of the Parties and conditions of the Covenant, of the nature, Properties, and promises of it: If they knew how kind and condescending the Lord is: how near he brings his Word: How little he will take of their hand: how solid the Covenant is; how sure the cautioner is, and how their Part of the Covenant is undertaken for as well as Gods; they would not have such doubts and fears; hence, *Rom. 14.* They who are weak in knowledge are said to be *weak in faith,*  
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Because through their Ignorance they have many doubts: This makes me to think, that if many of you had sincerity and seriousness in the great concern of your Salvation; ye would be much and almost inextricably Puddled, how to Rid your selves in many things ye would meet with in your condition, because of the abounding of your ignorance; ye cannot Alas! tell what Repentance is, what closing with Christ in the Covenant is, what Christs offices are, and what use should be made of them; and therefore if ye were put in o any strait or Dump through the sense of sin, it needed be no great wonder that ye should be in much confusion and did not know what to do to get out of it. It were good, therefore, that ye studied the knowledge of God and of the Covenant; that if ever God do you good, ye may have some clearness and distinctness in the way of the Remedy of your evils, and of extricating you out of your difficulties. But that which keeps many quiet, is, Alace! their own Presumption grown to a great height, and the devils rocking them fast asleep in the cradle of Securitie: it's a wonder to see so many very confident of Peace with God, who yet know not how it is come at: when God touches your Conscience, ye will be put to cry, what shall we do? Because of your ignorance. Secondly, It proceeds partly from want of experience; hence, though some, it may be, have light and knowledge: yet wanting experience of the thing, they are at a stand and know not what to do in this or that case; Just as if a man were to go to *London*, and were informed of all the Towns and Posts in the way; yet when he comes to advance in his Journey not having gone the way before; he is often in doubt whether he be right; So it is with many, who from literall knowledge can tell what faith and Repentance is, but when  
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their Spirits are Jumbled ( to speak so ) confused and put through other ; the matter looks far otherwise upon them : and they are like a man who coming to a shallow and safe ford of a River that is mudded , yet fears to take it, because he hath not ridden it before : whereas another that hath gone thorow it, can confidently hazard on it ; and indeed it is no Marvell to see much of this even amongst Believers. A *Third*, cause or ground whence this may proceed , is, prejudices at the way of God, and of persons at themselves : men have naturally a sort of Gospel of their own that they cannot go by, till someway they be constrained : and when God puts them to it, they are at a stand : as for instance , there is this Prejudice in some, that they think none can go and warrantably take hold of Gods Covenant till they be so and so humbled : that they cannot go with Convictions & Challenges, till they get some more deep heart-work, or be in a better and more tender frame, Hence *Peter* saith to *Christ* , *Luke 5.* very unreasonably , *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord* ; whereas *David* reasoned otherwise and much more Pertinently, *Psal. 25.* when he saith , *Pardon my iniquity, for it is great* : and hence the question ariseth, what shall we do? and when they are bidden believe : they Object , *Ab !* we are sinners, and have evil and hard hearts , and are unhumbled : look what Passed betwixt *Peter* and his hearers , *Acts. 2.* He layeth out before them their horrid guilt in crucifying *Christ* : they are Pricked in their hearts, and cry, *what shall we do ?* He bids them Repent and be Baptized, which takes in Faith, and *vers. 41.* It's said, that such as were kindly touched, Gladly received the Word ; Now I pray , what if they had objected, can we that have even now, or a very lile since, had our wicked hands embrewed in the precious blood of

of Christ Believe on him? Come away (saith he on the matter) for there is no other way to Pardon and Peace with God: there was much of this in the Primitive times amongst the Christian *Romans, Corinthians, Galatians*, and *Hebrews*, many Prejudices at and wrong conceptions of the Gospel and Covenant of Grace: and therefore they would have patched up a Gospel of Grace & of works: they would have brought in the Ceremonies of the Law and established a self-righteousness: and this in particular is one great Prejudice that the devil Laboureth deeply to possess the minds of wakened sinners with, even to make them think that it's Presumption for them, though they would fain do it, to come to Christ and by Faith to close with him, unless they be so and so qualified: as long as they are secure, he makes them take their Presumption for Faith: but the next day when they are wakened and exhorted to betake themselves to Christ by Faith, he calls that also Presumption: and indeed, as it is Satans manner to drive Sinners on extremes, So it is our way to run into extremes: that which made us call our Presumption Faith, is the same which makes us call our Faith presumption: because we lay it for a ground, that it is our honestie or good disposition, and so and so qualified frame, that must commend us to God: and therefore while we conceive that we have that, it's the ground of our presumption, and when the Conscience is wakened and we find that we want that, we cannot believe. A *Fourth* Cause or ground whence this, in some, may proceed, who would fain believe, is not so much their darkness and ignorance of the way, as the backwardness, frowardness, and deceit of their heart, that will not, for them, come up to it: such are puzzled and perplexed what to do, because they cannot get it well done



done & as they would : such are like a good Archer that can shoot well, but hath a deceitfull bow, which when he hath put his Arrow on the string and hath drawn it to the very head starts aside and makes him quite misse his mark : the fault and defect is not in the mans skill, but in the Bow: we the rather make use of this Comparison, that the Holy Ghost doth so in the Scripture, resembling our heart to a *deceitfull bow that turns aside* : So that, they who are acquainted with their own hearts, know not what to do with them, how to guide them, and bring them up unto or hold them at any thing that is good ; and though, it may be, they could to good purpose give directions to others in such a case : yet they find their own hearts very untractable to admit of them, as if they did not suit or meet with their own case. This is indeed a very puzzling difficultie, yet to such perplexed Souls there is no new direction to be given, but the renewed exercise of faith, and to put the directions, which they know, in practice ; and when one ihot ( to speak so ) misgives, to essay another, not to seek ( as it were ) a new string, but to cast a new knot on it, and if two knots should slip, to cast a third, improving more that Grace of the Covenant to make them hold better ; Therefore, *Acts 2* When those pricked in their hearts ask, what they shall do, *Peter* bids them Repeat : they were begun to do so, and he bids them be doing and go on : ye then that are indeed serious, and to whom your short comings are really your Souls burden, would not think it any uncouth, strange or extraordinary thing, to find desire and affection running far before your light and practise, ( though ye would endeavour to have them foot-side ) a Christians desire may be a dayes Journey ( as it were ) before himself, as to his attainment : and indeed in some respect it would not be good, if

if it were otherwise, for it is no good signe of progress in Gods way, when the desires of Persons go no further length then their Practise, or when they their Practice falls nothing short of their desires: both in that case are to be much suspected: for even eminently Holy Paul sees himself to be behind, *Philip. 3.* when he saith, *I think not myself perfect, but one thing I do forgetting things that are behind and reaching forth to those things that are before; I press towards the mark:* Where he came one Post in his attainment, His desire was ten, in a manner, before him: and so is it with those people here spoken of, *Come (say they) Let us join our selves to the Lord;* they find themselves to be behind, and endeavour to work themselves up, and to draw themselves, and one another forward: we must now draw to a close, and shall therefore but touch the following *Observations* and pass them in a word.

*Fifthly Observe, that in Peoples covenanting with God, their desires and designs will be much sooner Proposed and laid down, then they will be got accomplished and put in execution, or then they will win to satisfie themselves therein:* although an Union be betwixt Christ and them, yet they are not satisfied, till they be somewhat clear and distinct about it: they are like the Prodigal, who being in another and strange Countrey, saith first, *I will go,* then he ariseth: and, *I will say to my Father,* before he actually speak to his Father himself: calling him *Father:* Some reall acting of Faith Preceeds his more distinct et satisfieing acting of it: there is a faith in resolving to believe, before there be a resting of Faith or stayed believing: and yet it's Faith that begets that same resolution: if the Prodigal had not had some Faith of enough in his Fathers house, and of his Fathers affection, he would not have resolved to go home: and these



these people mentioned here would not have set their faces towards *Zion* ; if they had not had some begun stirrings of Faith.

*Sixthly Observe* , That it is a good token to be asking seriously the way to *Heaven* , though the askers be not so clear in it : there is some ground to think that such Persons are in the way , and if they hold on and follow the directions of the word , they may come thither : It is far better to be dissatisfied and to ask the Way : then not to ask , and yet to be satisfied with our own knowledge of the way.

*Seventhly Observe* , that Persons may fall very far short of their desire , and have much infirmitie , and may meet with many puzzling difficulties how to accomplish what they would be at : yet where a serious and longing desire is awakened after *Covenanting with God* , they should go forward and follow it forth. This people are short of what they desired , and yet they go , and they know not ( as it were ) where to set down the next foot till they ask the way , yet they go on still asking : there is no disputing here , but forward we should go : I suppose these here spoken of might have had severall difficulties started and severall obstructions laid in their way , yet on they go : as , *First* This , that they were Covenant breakers : yet they , taking seriously with it , step over that , and say notwithstanding , *Come let us join our selves to the Lord in a Covenant* . *Secondly* , they might have thought , that it was a very long Journey , and that they would never be able to go thorow to the end of it : besides that they were under the dominion of strange Kings who were *Heathens* : So it may be said on the matter , and is often said to serious Souls , that would fain believe , can ye believe ? It will not be with you : are ye not under the feet of many Tyrannous lusts ?

And

And how will ye win free from them? yet they resolve and must, yea dare not but resolve to go forward: and the reason is, because they resolve to take with their guilt and to make use of the Covenant for answering and silencing of challenges: and they resolve also, if the Journey be long, to make use of the Covenant for strength to make them hold on and hold out in it. The weak Believer when such doubts are started, should make use of the Promises of the Covenant, such as these; *Faithfull is he who hath called you, who also will do it, 1 Thess. 5. 24. Return back sliding Children, and I will heal your back-slidings, saith the Lord; and then follows, Behold we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God. Jer. 3. 22. They yeeld themselves to the Lord. A Third Difficultie is their ignorance; they might have said, we know not the way, and how can we think to come where we desire and designe to be? (as some will be ready to say, we can tell some words of the Catechisme, but Alace! We know not what it is to believe) yet they sit not still for all this, but as one Remedy of their ignorance, they ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward. And if ye Ask here, how can their faces be thitherward, when they are asking the way? And at whom do they ask the way. The Gentiles amongst whom they live know it not, and they have no other to ask at? I answer, they are hanging on God, and taking their Marks and meaths of the way, as he gives them from his word; and there is a most sweet word for such, *Isaiah 35. 8.* where the Lord speaking of this way, and calling it the way of Holiness, he saith, *The way faring man, though a fool, shall not erre therein: It's the heartsome way that can be; O! but it be safe for the way-faring sinner, for the seriously seeking Soul, to have the face toward God, for making up of Peace**

with



with him : upon the one hand, the Lord hedges up such persons their way with thorns, that they shal not find their lovers ; and upon the other, he constrains them to go right forward ; *He leads the blind in a way they know not, and makes darknes light before them* : are there not severals of you brought far thorow this day, and ye know not well how ? He brought you to Faith very insensibly, and trained you on peece and peece, and yet ye cannot tell well how ; but ye know certainly that it was *He* that did it ; and in this Case, O ! but it be good, singly to be given up to Gods leading and guiding ; *who leads his flock like a shepherd, who gathers his Lambs with his arm and carries them in his bosom, and gentlie leads them that are with young*, as it is, *Isaiah 40. 11.* The Lambs would run wild and ruine themselves, if left on the Hills : but they are under the good Shepherds oversight and tatorie ( to speak so ) who brings home the lost sheep on his Shoulders ( as it was even now said ) gathers the Lambs with his Arm, and gently leads them that are with Young ; which not only saith, that he drives not hard, lest they cast the young ; but that, as the Nurse leads the litle Child, ( otherwise then Ladies use to be led, by a gentle touch of their hand or arm ) by the arm holes or by the rugs, when the Child knows not how to go and cannot stand on its own feet, even so leadeth he such ; *I taught* ( saith the Lord, *Hosea 11.* ) *Ephraim also to go ; taking them by their arms* : when a poor Body hath Christ a forming in the heart, he will gently lead such an one and deal wonderfully tenderly with the person : ye who come honestly to him may confidently yeeld and give up yourselves to be his and guided by him, though ye be both weak and know not the way well ; if ye can but cast a look to him ( to speak so, ) or be sweetly silent before him,

him, allowing him to be doing and to take his way with you; if you lay yourselves humbly in dust, and wait what he will do to you, he will accept that Believing; *The Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeks him*; saith *Jeremiah Lamentations 3. 25. To wait on Gods leisure*, is a saying much abused, but it is very good and commendable here; *It is that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord*. Be not afraid, sincere and expectant Souls, I say be not afraid, when he is (as it were) pouring you from vessel to vessel, and putting you to his own holy and wise ends, in some confusion, so ye know not well what to do, or to what hand to turn; he is wondrous tender of you in that Case, will have a special care that ye Mis-carry not. This is a very sweet Subject, if we could speak suitably of it, Himself bless it to you.

## Jeremiah 50. Vers. 4. 5.

----- Going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God.

Vers. 5. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thither-ward, saying, Come, and let us give ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant, that shall not be forgotten.

## S E R M O N III.

IT is like, that, at the first reading of these Words, I will approve both the designe that this People had in engaging themselves to God in Covenant, and the

endea



is endeavour to have their engagement so solid and sure, in as it may not be broken any more, but may hold for ever: we take it for granted also, that ye will Judge, that the disposition and frame of Soul wherein they are, while about this great Business, is very becoming and suitable for such as have dealt unfaithfully and foully in the Covenant of God, and are from the Conviction thereof stirred, and put upon Resolutions to engage with him of new and to enter again into a Covenant with us; we Heartily wish, that it were a peece of our Exercise this night, before our approaching the Table of the Lord the next day, to compare the frame and setting of our hearts, with what these words hold forth, this Peoples frame and disposition to be.

Th We need not now speak to the Scope of the words, it being so clear, and having been touched at before. There is here a People Prophesied of, who are to be brought to Repentance and Covenanting with God in the Latter dayes, whose Spiritually good and desirable frame is described; *They shall go weeping and seeking the Lord,* each of them stirring up another, having this for their designe, and the Language of their hearts, *Come and let us Join our selves to the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten.*

That which we would now speak a litle to, is, *Two* Generals very much becoming a people who designe & intend to Covenant firmly with God: and seeing it is at this time, in a more especial manner, our professed designe to close the bargain with him, and in evidence thereof, are (if the Lord will) to partake of the Signe and Seal of the Covenant, as supposing it to be indeed a closed bargain, or at least, that it is seriously desired of us that it may be so; they will not be unsuitable for you to hear and make use of them,

The *First* Generall then is this, that *Covenanting* with God, when People are in earnest in it, will be a very up-  
 taking, exercising and weighty business. This is clear  
 here, if ye consider how these People go about the  
 work; they are in very good earnest; and there are  
 several evidences of it; they are weeping and going: they  
 are seeking the Lord; asking the way to Zion with their  
 faces thitherward; and every one of them stirring  
 another to renew the Covenant, and to cast the knot  
 firmly, that it may be *A perpetual Covenant* never  
 be forgotten, and such as may never loose or be broke  
 again; whence the generall is clear, viz. that when  
 People mind in earnest the making up of a breach be-  
 twixt God and them (which is done by Covenanting  
 with him) it will be an exercising and uptaking bu-  
 siness to them. Ye may consider some Scriptures for  
 confirmation of this, which will also hold out what it is  
 and namely, *Matth. 11. 12. The Kingdom of Heaven*  
*suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*, The  
 Lord is speaking there of mens making Peace with God  
 through himself the Mediator, by which they are brought  
 to Heaven; and he tells, that it is a most serious bu-  
 siness that will abide them brangling (to speak so) and  
 using of violence; *Luke 13. 25. strive to enter in at a*  
*strait gate*, for many will seek, and shall not be able  
 it is a narrow gate, and there must be thronging and thr-  
 ing, to win in at it: men will be put to a sort of *Agon*  
 as the word signifies: consider also *Paul's* word, *1 Co*  
*9. 24. So run as ye may obtain*, insinuating, that this  
 is a sort of running, wherein men are not in earnest,  
 indifferent whether they get the Prize or not; and  
 therefore he would have them making earnest of it; and  
 he Proposeth his own practise as an example and a  
 pic to them, *I therefore run, not as uncertainly*; so fight



not as one that beate the Air : but I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have Preached to others, I my self should be a cast away : these are the expressions of a man, who is in good earnest in this business : and his seriousness therein is Proposed to you for a Pattern, what way ye should run and fight : the like word we have, Philip. 3. 13. *This one thing I do, (it's an up-taking work to me) Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press towards the mark, for the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus :* and vers. 11. *If by any means (saith he) I might attain unto the Resurrection of the dead :* every word hath it's own weight to make it out, that it is so his one thing, that he cares not what it cost him, so be, he may obtain it.

That which we would say further on this point shall be a word of Application in these **Two or Three Uses**. The *First* whereof serves for *Instruction* ; would ye know what is required of you as a direction to dutie at this time ; And would ye know if things be right in your preparation for the Communion ? This may be a *Mark* to discern, and a direction on the matter ; even to be serious, and to make it an uptaking business, your *One thing*, to be about it, as such an occasion and work calls you to be. And if ye shall ask, wherein consists this Seriousness and uptaking exercise, in Covenanting with God ? I shall Sum it up to you in these *Four*, which comprehend it. *First*, The man is taken up, in

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respect of exercise in his Conscience; convictions become fresh, Challenges are put home, he is pricked less or more at the very heart; there is something within him that gives him a Conscience-alarm, that puts in his hand a Libell, and assures him of an appearance before Gods Tribunal: and indeed unless some thing of this be, men will not be in earnest; and it is clearly implied in the *Text*; For there are here sharp Challenges, that make this People weep, and that extort tears from their eyes. *Secondly*, There is a seriousness in respect of the work that it hath on Peoples hearts and affections; there will be a kindling of desires to have Covenanting with God at a point, with a holy fear, lest they miscarry in the doing of it; and these put together do much take up the man, and make him seek after thorow acquaintance with his own Spirit, which he finds to be so fickle, inconstant and back-sliding; and thus, apprehending the work to be great and difficult, he is put in Holy fear and Jealousie over himself, lest he marr the matter and make it worse with himself; as it is said of Godly sorrow, *2 Cor. 7. 11. What carefulness, what fear, what indignation, what vehement desire, what zeal, what revenge it wrought in them*: Now when these are tumbling ( to speak so ) thorow other in the man, and he hath an inward wrestling to have the work secured, and is afraid lest it miscarry; Is it Possible, but he will be serious and much taken up; and this is also implied in the words; *Come ( say they ) And let us join to the Lord in a Perpetual Covenant*



**Covenant**; There is a desire to have the Covenant at a point, and they fear it slip, while they are casting the knot; therefore they say, let it be a *Perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten*: It's good to fear in the very time. *Thirdly*, This seriousness is in respect of Peoples dutie; It makes them pray that never prayed before to Purpose; It makes them examine themselves, Meditate, Read and conferr that never knew before what it was to be taken up with those duties: Therefore we find this People going and seeking the Lord and exciting one another: they are put to their feet, and to reaching forward, so that they leave nothing undone, whereby they may attain the end. *Fourthly*, This Seriousness appears in the manner of their going about duties: there is another edge, then was wont to be on their prayers, Self-Judging, and wrestling with God: they are much like to *Jacob*: they will not let the Lord go till he bless them: they will still wrestle, though it should be all the night: they cannot find in their heart to part with him on any terms: and (as the word is, *Isaiah. 64.*) they shall *stirr up themselves to take hold of him*: they are not only going but *weeping*: they are not for the fashion in the work: they seek the Lord and stir up one another to do so: May we then *ask* you, are ye thus in earnest making for the Communion? Nay (for this is not all) are ye thus in earnest about Covenanting with God? which must preceed and go before, if things be right: It were good preparation, to have our very hearts moving and fluttering (as it were) within us to be at this.

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The *Second Use* serveth for *Exposition* with many that pretend a desire and designe of *Covenanting* with God, and that they would be at Heaven: but yet were never in good earnest, to have things at a point betwix God and them, and to make sure a *Covenant-interest* in him: The most part are, *Alace!* taken up with poor low and insignificant things, with unnecessary things comparatively: If they be sick, they will be in earnest about the means of their health: if they suffer any loss in their estate, they will be serious to have it made up: if their credit be impaired, they will be much concerned to have it repaired: they are carried forth with a sort of Bentness towards those things: but *Ah!* where is there a man or woman amongst many, with their faces towards *Zion* in a *Serious* manner and with a resolute purpose, that peace with God, Holiness and Heaven they must have? Here is the great stop and stand: and is it possibly, think ye, that ye can have peace in your going about durie, while ye are not serious, nor strive to win in at the strait gate, when ye exercise not your selves to Godliness, when ye never (to speak so) cast your coat, nor Strip your selves naked, as it were (as the word, *1 Tim. 4 7* Signifies) for that great work: when ye do not run and wrestle, as those who mind to obtain? but are intangled in the things of the World and languish with laziness in every thing that is Spiritually and truly good: how few are there under much exercise about the case of their Souls, afraid lest they miss the mark and prize: with Jealousie over themselves, lest they mistake the way to Heaven? How few are there, who have it for their *One thing*, to be firmly Joined to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant? It's my fear that amongst all the great Number that are here, there be but very few to be found who are in earnest



earnest in this great business. I shall hint at a few sorts, that are not in earnest. *First*, Such who are very serious to be at the externall ordinance of the Communion, and who will, it may be, take it ill, if they be kept back from it, who yet never troubled themselves, nor were seriously taken up with Covenanting with God, and with the study of Holiness in all manner of Conversation, or how to come by the enjoyment of his speciall and gracious presence: they can be year and day, nay many years, without it and never miss it, nor be troubled with the want of it: Alace! It is not seriousness to be at the Communion, without this, which will profit you; and even ye that are not admitted to the Communion, are called to this. A *Second Sort* are such, as are indifferent in all religious concerns; they care not for the Communion, and would not be very desirous of it, if it were not a shame to them, and some reflection on them to be debarred from it; they think, that whatever in Religion goeth beyond their Job, is but preciseness, Niceness, Vanity, Conceit and Fattery; such never knew what it was to be troubled with doubting or Tentations about their Souls state, or the truth and reality of their Grace, nor what it was to be under any exercise of Conscience on the account of much sin and Guilt; nay they are glad and can boast themselves that they were never under any such serious exercise. A *Third Sort* is of such, who are very civil in their carriage, but they have no more; & if Heaven may be had with Ceremonies & fair fashions, they will be in it as soon as any, but they cannot endure to be at pains beyond their ordinary, to take hold of it, to do violence to their own negligence, to take the Kingdome of Heaven by force, nor in the least to amend their Pace, & to be Serious, come of it what may: These are a dangerous company, they have

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Communicated many years, and were never debarred and so, think that all is well with them; and that they may sit still and be at peace: I shall only say to such that, that was not *Dauids* way, nor *Pauls* way, nor the way of any of the Saints, nor the way that Christ Comended to his hearers: and I trow, he will not chalk out another way to you; nor take you to Heaven in a way by yourselves, or in a way of your own: O be not deceived, for God will not be mocked. A *Fourth* Sort are those who have been ordering and dispatching their externall busineses, so as they may win to the Communion without distraction by them; but they have taken little or no pains at all to put their hearts in order; little or no time in Secret betwixt God and them to examine and try, whether matters, as to their Soul state and frame, be right, clear and distinct; It's the alone direction that the Apostle gives, *1 Cor. 11. 28. Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat*; That's a serious man who puts himself to that Comprehensive and up-taking exercise in earnest, who proves himself if he be in the Faith; whose heart smites him that he hath not taken as much time in Secret, as he hath done in coming to a preaching: It may be, many have come four or five miles to a preparation Sermon, who yet never Seriously once looked within themselves to see how matters stood betwixt God and them: O sad, lamentable and Soul-ruining neglect!

The *Third Use* Serves for *Exhortation*: and let me Exhort, Beseech, and Obtest you, to study to be in good earnest in this business; Believe it, the business of Covenanting with God, so as, from this time forth, ye may have it made sure and clear that ye are Gods and that God is yours, is a thing of greatest Concernment.



of infinitely greater, then if Kings and such as are called  
 Protectors were sending Ambassadors to treat with you  
 about making you great in the World. To press this a  
 little, let me *Ask* you, in the *First* place, what think  
 ye will come of it, if the Covenant be not made sicker  
 betwixt God and you? Ye will most certainly live and  
 ly still, yea even dy strangers to God, liable to his curse  
 and wrath ready to be inflicted on you: O lay this to  
 heart, if ye Believe that God will call you all to a reck-  
 oning, and that he will say to such of you as are not in  
 Covenant with him, *Depart from me, I never knew you;*  
 Yea, suppose there were not such great ground of fear  
 as to that, as indeed there is: can ye promise to your  
 selves Gods hearing any of your Prayers, the perform-  
 ance of any Promise, or the accepting of any duty off  
 your hand as service to him, till ye be in Covenant with  
 the Lord? And think ye nothing or but litle of this?  
 Secondly, Consider the great prejudice that follows on  
 not Covenanting with God, and that will attend many  
 in the visible Church; *Many* (saith the Lord, *Luke*  
*13.*) *Will seek to enter, who shall not be able;* The so-  
 lid Faith of this would make many Congregations to  
 tremble: for it's not only many profane persons, but  
 many of them that countenance Ordinances, yea many  
 of them that have preached and prayed to the Edification  
 of others, and many of them who have heard Christ  
 preach in their streets, and who have countenanced faith-  
 full Ministers, and furthered the work of God, and  
 who have had indignation at others that did not so; who  
*will not be able to enter;* this word, with that other  
 which we have, *Psal. 78. 34.* where there is such a  
 seeming seriousness and personating of many Graces of  
 the Spirit, and yet nevertheless, it is but a flattering of  
 God with the mouth and a lying to him with the tongue.

( which is a very rife and common thing amongst professors amongst such as profess Covenanting with God should put us in fear. And *Thirdly*, Consider this, have ye have naturally such hearts as others have, that are ready to beguile you, and to back slide and slip off from God; and are not those beguiles and disappointments of others written for our warning and advertisement? And if any of you should say, we hope there is no such ground of fear as to us. That's but a bewraying of your Ignorance and senselessness; for those who are best acquainted with their own hearts will tell you, that it is a ticklish and difficult business to deal truly and thoroughly with God: Do ye not know, that many take a counterfeit for grace? And were ye not hearing lately, that many Hypocrites have personated almost (if there be need to say, almost) every Grace; surely many of you will find it true one day, that *the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*: and that ye have erred and played the fool's egregiously, and in nothing more then in trusting your own hearts: for saith the wise man, *He that trusts his own heart is a fool*. *Fourthly*, Consider, that it is now come to a Nick and pinch with you, that either ye must close the Covenant with God, or put your selves farther under his Curse, and eat and drink damnation to your selves: because ye have mis-kent Gods Covenant, and slighted Covenanting with him, and so have come as enemies to his Table without making your friendship with him: we declare to you, that ere the morrow at this time many of you will either have a bit or a Miss of the greatest bargain and of the greatest concernment that ever was made betwixt parties: and although ye should not eternally incapacitate your selves for Covenanting with God, which many may do, and bring themselves under such a sentence,

sentence,



sentence, ~~that~~ they shall never henceforth be quickened nor awaked any more: yet ye may make your bands stronger, and may make the business of your Covenanting with God far more difficult to your selves, then now it might be.

The *Second* general *Observation* is this, that a *soft, tender and melting heart* is a good and suitable frame for *Covenanting with God*: would ye then know, what is a fit frame for Covenanting with God? It's even this, a heart melting frame; *they shall go weeping as they go*; they have much seriousness, inward stir and warmth of heart, and that makes it to melt, and (as it were) flow down before the Lord; this is according to what we have, *Zech. 12. 10. I will (saith the Lord) Pour upon the house of David, and on the inhabitation of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and supplications, and they shall look to him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn and be in bitterness as one is for his first born*: even when they are coming home, and asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, and about to enter in Covenant, they are mourning; Hence, *Isaiah 44. 3. 4. 5.* And elsewhere, even almost where ever entering into, or renewing of the Covenant with God is spoken of, the out-pouring of the Spirit is spoken of also; a pouring water on him that is thirstie and floods of the dry ground: bringing Rivers out of Rocks, &c. for preparing a People for the Lord. And this will be the more clear, if we consider, that softness and melting of heart gives a man a right impression of himself, and a right impression of God and of his free Grace and goodness; and it makes the man to become tending, tractable, Pliant and yielding to God, and also makes way for much Spiritual sense and comfort, and for Gods refreshfull manifesting of himself to the Soul that is so pliable  
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and tender : thus the Lord saith, *Hos. 2. 14. I will allure her and bring her to the wilderness and speak comfortably to her, or to her heart, as the word is ; Alluring speaks pliability, & that hath Gods Comfortable speaking to the heart following on it.*

The *First Use* of this point serves to give you another *Mark for Triall*, if things be right and in good case with you, for Covenanting with God : and as the upshot of all, to commend such a desirable frame as this to you : would ye know then further, what is a right frame for Covenanting with God ? Here it is, even to have a heart melting within, to have a soft tender and mournfull disposition of Soul : and would ye know what this is ? We think that from the words it may be gathered to consist in these *five* or *six* things that concur to it. *First*, There are some pricking challenges for sin and wrongs done to God : they humbly acknowledge, take with and are made sensible of these. *Secondly*, There is some missing and sensibleness of the want of Gods presence, and of the want of Communion and Fellowship with him : they know not well where he is, but they are a king after him. *Thirdly*, There is an ardent affection and serious desire to be at him and in Covenant with him, a heart filled with love to God, whereby it is softened and made to flow down, as wax by the fire is melted, and the hardest iron made soft. *Fourthly*, There is a Holy fear and carefulness, whereby the heart is kept from growing cold and indifferent as to this condition, and from settling and sitting down in it ; such a fear and trembling as old *Eli* had, *1 Sam. 4.* for the *Ark*, whereby he was kept in a fright : here is going and weeping, with a Holy fear lest the Covenant be again broken. *Fifthly*, There is a self loathing, kindly humiliation & exercise of Repentance, which especially appears



appears in this weeping : when serious looking into the persons own Condition so affects the heart, as it flows, either in tears without, and in sighs and groans within, or in the latter without the former. There is a Holy indifferencie as to their externall lot, and an absolute submissiveness to the will of God to be dealt with and disposed upon as himself thinks fit : If so be they be admitted into a Covenant with him, they are sweetly Submissive to the terms, let God do with them what he will, they know it will be well ; if they get once within the bond of his Covenant, and that it will never be well with them, if they be without it : Though this be somewhat general, yet it will be found to be a near yea a narrow tryall : If softness of heart bespeak a good frame and fit for Covenanting with God : Ah ! where is it ? The little heart-softness that is amongst us is one of the neck-breaks of Religion, and marrs our growth exceedingly : what shall we say or think of our condition, when we call to remembrance the seekers of God of o'd, who watered their couches with tears and made their beds to swim : who mingled their drink with tears and their meat with weeping ? O ! what is become of that now ? or what Religion is this that we have in these dayes, in comparison of that which they had, who were so serious and so much affected and heart-wrought with their Religion, when we are so chil-cold and frozen, when our hearts are scarce kindly warmed, much less softened and melted ? It is no wonder there be much lamenting for the want of sense and life, when there is so much heart-hardness the contrarie of this heart melting softness.

But it may be *Asked* here : How comes it to pass, that the People of God are now so unlike that which  
 Gods

Gods People were wont to be: so little softened, contrit, and melted? I speak not of externall weeping and shedding of tears: for there may be much of that, where the heart is but little softened, though not ordinarily: often when the heart is inwardly melted, externall weeping in some Measure follows, though the one of these may be and is some times without the other: neither do I speak of that softness which is peculiarly requisite for the Communion: but of that which is called for in our ordinary walk, to make us folding, yeelding, and pliable to God, ready to receive any impression that he will please to stamp on us: what (I say) can be the causes of the want of this. Or that we are not in it as Gods people were wont to be? *I answer First*, It may be, that Professors now have much more conceit of their Profession, and content themselves better with the form, and with the Gospels being clearer now then it was in former days; and *God resists the proud*, yea even pride in the Godly: Trembling & such other evidences of tenderness in severall of those Saints mentioned in the Scripture, are not much to be found with us, we are Alace! very unlike them; a sharp word from God would have made the strongest of them to tremble, nay the Godly are several times in the old Testament described to be *tremblers at the word*; but we, very generally, are bolstered up, in a manner, with much stout-heartedness and self conceit, as if we were above challenges, fears, doubtings and puzzling cases of Conscience: *David, Job, Paul* and others of the Saints, who had not such ground for that sort of exercise, as most of us have, may I not say, as all of us have? yet were more in it then we. Whence this comes, were worthy of our serious enquiry. It's probable that Pride and Self conceit have much influence upon it. *Secondly*,

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We fear that Christians now a dayes have much betaken themselves to the external deckings and adornings of religion, with neglect, in part at least, and to the Prejudice of Religion it self, of the soul and substance of it; The Godly of old were single and Plain in Religion, (as *Jacob* is called a *plain Man*) and taken up with the power of Godliness; but many now are so much taken with gifts and are so fond of them; that a Covenant interest, self-denial, Mortification and the like, take them up the less: Many of you are at more labour and Pain to hold up a Name, then to mortifie such a lust, as is a Self-seeking humour, or to have matters tho' ough and clear betwixt God and you. *Thirdly*, They made more and greater account of Communion with God then we do, seeking after it as a thing they were taken up with, which now, *Alace!* is much neglected: because we hear that our Salvation doth not depend simply on intimate and familiar fellowship with God, we are the less carefull and solicitous about it; whereas of old, the want of it made them *Sick of Love*, as the Spouse is, *Cant. 5* And what longing, fainting and out-crying is there for it, *Psal. 42*? It was a Prison to them to be in a Palace wanting Gods Company: This is a main thing that softens peoples hearts, even to have the Lord manifesting himself to have the light of his Countenance lifted up, and the beams of his love and good will shining warm on us; too much seeking of great things for our selves, for grandure or greatness in the world, in making godliness some way to be gain and counting gain (as it were) to be Godliness: *Alace!* it is not much our care to have victory over the World, and that it may have like of our heart and Christ much of it: It's not the designe that we drive with suitable vigour, even to be Heavenly minded and to brook a soft heart

heart : *Love not the World* (saith the Apostle, 1 John 2. 15.) *Not the things of the World*, for *whoso loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him* : They so far overcame the world, that they suffered joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves, they had a better and an enduring substance in heaven, as it is Heb. 10. 34. But the wicked, and men of the world, having what heart can wish, even waters of a full cup are wrung out to them ; Gods People turn in thither, and will needs essay and try the comforts of a present world, what satisfaction they can yeeld them, as we may see Solomon did, to his great prejudice : for the things of the world in a great measure got the upper hand of him, and that after the Lord had appeared to him twice : It were good and much to be wished that many of you did espy this evil in your selves : the Scripture insists much in it, as that which mens hearts are mainly carried out after : and yet we can get none almost convinced of it : Men will be got convinced of gross out-breaking evils ; but of this evil, the most earthly minded wormes cannot be gotten convinced : nay even good people are hardly got convinced of it : but ye are not in the less hazard of it : and we wot well, it's a plague in the Generation that we live in, and hath much defaced Religion as to it's beauty, in the face of the Conversation of many : Ah ! how much are they, in this, conformed to the word ? And how Lamentably little behave they like *Pilgrims and Strangers* in it, as the *Saints* did of old ?

As A Second Use of this point, We have ground here to Commend to you the studie of a Soul-fixing & fastening condition : as ye would not make an unsure bargain with God, endeavour to have this tottleness and melting of heart : This thing is that which makes a man to sit  
alone



alone and to keep silence before God, Lam. 3. 27. And so to be in a posture of meeting and covenanting with him: such of you as know nothing of this, and are not afraid of being hard, cold and dead at such an occasion, are in eminent hazard of losing a good bargain: and wo to Security and hardness, that hath that as the fruit of it: and in the by we may say that there is a Wo abiding many of you, who have no Serious thoughts of this frame, and especially at such a time. Therefore let me *Exhort* you to compose your selves, as having to do with God, and as having Gods love and favour, and his hatred and wrath laid together in the ballance, and as having life and death set before you, and seriously to seek after such a soft and tender frame of Soul that fits for Covenanting, for renewing the Covenant, and for comfortable communicating.

But some may *Object* and say, It is very sad, if this be peremptory, that persons who would rightly renew their Covenant and Communicat, must be in a Soft and melting frame. *Answer*, It's usefull, and it's needfull, nay in some measure it's Simply necessary: What shall we then do that want it? for *Answer*, I wish many were asking the question from serious Minding, prizing and longing after the thing: for the want of Softness proceeds often from this, that we do not seriously mind it, otherwise, the want of it would much affect and afflict us, and would put us to ask after it, and God would not fail to give them direction that were thus asking the way to Zion. Yet for your help in this matter, I would say these three Words. 1. Once take a view of your case and labour to have a distinct look of it: what lusts are up, what challenges may be Tabled, and keep a good count of them. 2. Endeavour to have faith in Exercise on Gods Covenant and promises, and be

be sure that the Promise is sicker that ye lay hold on and see that ye make Use of it according to the Covenant : which is done , when with your Souls ye take hold of it : and that is not , nor shall not be reckoned presumption , when ye bestir your selves from the Faith of Gods Covenant and Promises , laying the weight of that which ye would be at on the Promise , cleaving thereto for attaining of it , and in time , through Gods Blessing , your unsuitableness shall piece meal wear away , and ye shall become tender : and any bit of softness and tenderness that ye win at , cherish and watch over it. 3. Make this a particular errand to God , having your Eye on the Covenant of promises , and on this Promise in it in Particular , and on other promises of this Nature and to this purpose , as , concerning taking away the stonie heart and giving a heart of flesh : of giving you a new heart : of making you to loath your selves , for all your abominations : apprehending , receiving and closing with Christ in the Covenant for attaining of it as a fruit of his purchase : for it is not gotten but in the Covenant : and therefore its remarkable that this Scripture is set down Promise-wise , *They shall come , the Children of Israel and the Children of Judah together : your Heavenly Father who knows that ye have need of this thing ( as it is Math. 6. 32. ) will give his holy Spirit to them that ask him , as it is Luke 11. 13.* And ye would credit and trust him with the performing of that Promise to you : and endeavouring to be Serious in having this for your task and work , ye shal find it made good for you and to you.



Jeremiah 50. Vers. 5.

..... Come, and let us Joyn our selves to the Lord, in a perpetuall Covenant that shall no. be forgotten.

S E R M O N IV.

**I**T is a most desirable designe and worthy to be driven vigourously by us all, to the prosecution whereof it would very well become us to stir up and rouze our selves and one another, according to the Laudable Practice of these here mentioned, even to hasten towards a closure of the Covenant of Grace betwixt God and us: to have it sounding loud in our ears, and to have it as the Language of our hearts whetted to an edge in pursuit of the thing. Come, let us Joyn our selves to the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant that shall never be forgotten: It should be the great work and business of a Communion-Sabbath in a speciall manner, as it is our professed designe this day, to close and make sure this Covenant and blessed bond betwixt the Lord and us.

Having spoken somewhat formerly at several occasions to these sweet words. I shall not now trouble you either with the division or explication of them: but shall instantly propose Six or Seven Observations from them, and then speak a word to the scope, and to the Application of them, in the close: and though it be but a short word from each of them that we have to speak; yet they will be found to be very Concerning to us, and therefore we would take the more exact notice of them.

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The *First Observation* then is, that *There is such a thing as distinct Covenanting, or mutuall engaging in Covenant betwixt God and a poor sinner.* This is clearly holden out in these words as their *Scope*; It were to no Purpose for them to say, *Come and let us Join our selves to the Lord in a Covenant,* if there were not such a thing as a *Covenant union of God and sinners.* The *Scripture* is full to this Purpose; and the treatie of ordinances is kept up for this end; as we have it, *Isaiah 55. 1, 2, 3. Ho every one that thirsts come to the waters, &c. Incline your ear and come unto me, Hear and your Souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* This is the *Scope* that the *Ordinances* aim at. In *Prosecuting* of this a little further; we shall, *First*, Explicat what *covenanting* is, in generall. *Secondly*, What this *covenanting with God* is, 1. In respect of the parties. 2. In respect of the terms thereof. And 3. In respect of the ground on which it is founded. And *Thirdly*, To the form of this *Covenanting*.

*First* then, *Covenanting* in generall may be cleared, from what *Covenanting* among men is: Which is a mutuall engaging of two parties on *Mutual* terms; the one Party offering such a thing on such terms and conditions; the other partie accepting on those terms and Conditions On which the offer is made: as we see in a contract of *Marriage*, the man engageth to be the *Womans*, on condition that she be his, and she engageth to be his wife; as he engageth to be her husband, and each engageth to perform suitable duties to the other; And we make use of this the rather that the *Scripture* alludeth to it in this matter.

*Secondly*, We are to consider *Covenanting*, as it is betwixt *God* and a sinner: for we are not now speaking of



of the Covenant of works betwixt God and *Adam*; wherein there was made an offer and Promise of life upon condition of Perfect Obedience; So that if he did that which was Commanded him, he should live, but we are now speaking of Gods Covenanting with a sinner; for that is the Covenant spoken of here: It is indeed a great wonder that ever there should have been a Covenant betwixt God and a Creature; But a greater wonder that there should be a Covenant betwixt him and a sinfull creature: whatever is spoken in Scripture of the Covenant of Grace, belongs to this Covenant. *First, The Parties in this Covenant* are God and the sinner, Gods Creature, but a sinfull creature; It's the Lord *Jehovah*, and we the house of *Israel*, and we the house of *Judah*. *Secondly, The terms of the Covenant* are not, *Do this and live*, though the Promise be the same, for it's life that is offered; yet it's not on the same terms; for though the life be as good as that which was promised to *Adam*; yet the terms are far better: The substance of this Covenant we have set down, *Jer. 30. 31, 32, 33.* and cited *Heb. 8. 10, 11, 12.* unto which this same invitation doth here relate; *I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers; But this shall be it, I will write my law in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People, &c.* And Come (say they here) and let us join in it: His engagement is to be their God, and their engagement is to be his people, and the terms follow; which are on Gods part, free forgiveness of sins through the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them, thorew whom they are accepted, as if there had never been a quarrel. And on their Part, by faith to take hold of him and of the Pardon of sin, which separated betwixt

be wixt him and them, through Jesus Christ, as he  
 offered to them; Therefore, Rom. 10. 6. It's call'd  
*the Righteousness of Faith*, oppos'd to *the Righteousness*  
*of the Law*, spoken of before; and what saith it?  
 saith not, *who shall go up to Heaven?* nor *who shall*  
*scend into the depth?* But the word is nigh thee, even  
*thy mouth* and *in thy heart*, that is *the righteousness*  
*Faith*, which we preach, that if thou shalt confesse  
*thy mouth the Lord Jesus*, and shalt believe in thy heart  
 that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.  
 That is, if ye make suitable use of Christ for your Peace  
 with God, and give up your selves to him to be his  
 Servants, ye shall get peace and Pardon of sin here, and  
 Eternal life and Salvation hereafter. These in short  
 the terms on which God offereth himself to sinners.  
 Thirdly, The Ground of this, and how it comes to pass  
 that such a Covenant is accessible, is the Mediators  
 interposing in a Covenant of Redemption with the Father  
 concerning elect sinners; wherein he hath procured the  
 Covenant of Grace betwixt God and sinners, by  
 Performing the condition required of him in that C  
 venant; for this Covenant of Grace and Reconciliation  
 is nothing else, but the result of the Covenant of R  
 demption and the execution thereof; we had never had  
 ground to say, that there is a way laid down for  
 peace with God, except there had been a Covenant  
 Redemption betwixt him and the Mediator; where  
 the Mediator undertook to satisfy Justice for the sins  
 the Elect, by bearing their iniquities; and hath the P  
 mise of being Satisfied for the travail of his Soul, by  
 seeing of a seed, and by his Justifying many thorough Fa  
 in him; as it is Isaiah 53. 11. This gives the rise to  
 Covenant of Grace betwixt God and sinners; and the  
 fore these two are put together, Isaiah 55. 3. And



your ear, come unto me, hear and your Souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David; That is, the sure mercies of the Messiah; the assignation whereof, even of the Purchase of Redemption made by him, is by Covenant made over to the Believer in him; and therefore when we speak of this Covenant, it alwayes supposeh & implieh Christ, who *Isaiah 42 6*. Is called the Covenant; because he is given for the ground of Covenanting betwixt God and sinners; it being by him and in him, that God and sinners meet; there being a gulf (as it were) betwixt sinners and God, he hath made himself the bridge, on which sinners may come over and meet with God; and the Covenant brings us to Christ; as under the Law, Christ was typed out by the *Mercy seat* and the *Arke*, wherein the law was put, to shew the linking together of Christ and the Covenant: the efficacie of the Covenant flowing from Christ, and the Covenant giving us a title to Christ, and making Christ accessible to us: It layes (as it were) a Bridge to us to step on, and makes an open door to us to enter in by on Christ, and by Christ to the *Holie of Holies thorow the vail*, which is his flesh.

Thirdly, As for the *Form* of this Covenanting, it is, as in other Contracts, God making the offer; and the person accepting it; Gods offer is in the word of the Gospel, wherein he saith, *Come and I will make a Covenant with you*: as the Apostle hath it, *Rom. 10. The word is near thee, even in thy Heart and in thy mouth*: and the Sum of it is, *If ye Believe in Jesus Christ, ye shall be saved*; the proposing whereof in the Gospel, is the laying of Gods offer before you, and its as really Gods offer, as if audibly he were speaking to you from Heaven, as he once spake the Law on Mount Sinai: It

It being his Authority, by which Ministers are sent to treat & close this Covenant with you: As it is, *2 Cor. 5. We are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were beseeching you by us: we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God: That is, be friends with him by entering in Covenant with him: and he sheweth us the ground of it: For he who knew no sin, was made sin for us that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him: God's offer is, I am Content to be thy God, and to make that is mine forthcoming to thee for thy good, upon condition thou quit thy own righteousness and betake thee to my Son the mediator for righteousness and life. The sinners Covenanting is his formal and distinct, at least, his reall consenting to that offer on these terms, saying with his very heart, I am content to have God be my God, not by vertue of any thing in my self, but by vertue of Christs satisfaction, which hath procured access to sinners for peace and Reconciliation with God, and this is called a Submitting to Christs Righteousness. So then, there is a devoting of the Soul to God, a heart consenting to give it self away to him to be saved and Sanctified, to live to him and to his Honour; as *Isaiah 44. 5. One shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall Subscribe with his hand unto the Lord; As if it were said, whose are you? and the person should say, I am Gods, for, as plainly and distinctly, at least as really and solemnly, a person wrought upon by Gods Spirit, gives Answer and return to Gods offer in his Covenant, and resignes himself to God, as if Paper were laid down before him, and he should subscribe his Name with his hand to be Gods. There is an obligation really taken on, and a consent plainly given: the person with his very heart Subscribing the Contract; which, 2 Chri**



30 8. is called a *yeelding or giving the hand to God*. He cometh with stretched out armes in the Gospel, and saith, Man or woman, who findest thy self lost, close with me in my Son Christ, and thou shalt be saved; and our consenting is, our hearts catching hold of that word and yeelding to him, as one striking hands with another, with whom he hath before been at odds & variance; in signe of his being content and satisfied to be reconciled to him, and of his being so in very deed.

The *Second Observation* is, That *This covenanting with God hath with it or in it a near union and Conjunction with the Lord*. Let us (say they) Join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant; the word *Joining* hath in it a speciall *Emphasis*, being such as is used to set out the conjunction that is betwixt the Husband and Wife; for this cause (saith the Lord) *shall a man leave Father and Mother and cleave to his wife, and so the wife cleaveth to her husband*; Thus the word is, Gen. 29. 34. *Now shall my Husband be joined to me; therefore she called his name Levi*, which flowes from this root, *Added or Joined*. In prosecuting this point a litle, we would speak shortly, 1. To the nature of this Union. 2. To the properties of it. *First*, As to it's Nature, we would consider, that there is. 1. A legall union, wherein by contract and bond there is a transferring of the interest of one Partie to another; which is here; for God becomes the sinners God, and the sinner becomes Gods own, as his portion and Property; Even as in marriage, the Husband

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is the wives, and the wife is the Husbands, and the Relation stands, though they should be in Severall Kingdomes. 2. There is a Mysticall union, which is spirituall and more Mysterious, whereby God becometh one with Covenanting sinners, and they become one with him; God by his Spirit dwelling in the Covenanter, and the Covenanter dwelling by faith in God: which floweth from the former mutually transferred right or legall union, and followeth on it: In which respect it's said, 1 Cor. 6. 17. *He that is Joyned to the Lord is one spirit; He is Gods Temple, and God by his Spirit dwells in him*: by this *one spirit*, is meant a Spirituall conjunction, Union or Communion: whereby God takes hold really of the Soul by his Spirit, and the Soul takes a reall hold of God by Faith: they do mutually embrace each other, as the Husband doth the wife by vertue of their Union. 3. This Union implyeth a nearness, a friendliness, an intimacy and familiarity, and it is opposed to distance and estrangement from God: The Covenant really entered into, is like a bond to keep the believer near God, glued (as it were) and straitly join'd to him: or it is a cementing with God, to speak so: By this Covenant God and sinners are made near and knit to one another and kept from ever Separating: There is such a near and strait Union betwixt Christ and Believers, as is betwixt the foundation or corner-stone and the house, yea as is betwixt the vine and the branches, Ephes. 2. John 15.

Secondly, As for the Properties of this Union by Covenant,



Covenant, a few of which we shall only now touch at, not having access to enlarge, as this Subject by it self, would require. 1. It is with the Lord himself, not with any benefit, common gift or Grace or Mercie, these follow the union with himself, the Covenanter becomes *one Spirit with him* (as is said,) and saith the Apostle, *Ephes. 5. we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone*. 2. This Union is in and through Christ, by whom it is made up: he being the Temple and Tabernacle or meeting place wherein we meet with God: So that we are not anxiously to enquire, nor curiously to dispute here, how our union with God, and with the Mediator do differ: we unite with God in him, and upon the Grounds of his Redemption, in which respect, our union with God is more Mediat. 3. This Union is very friendly, most firm and indissoluble: It's a wonderfull near and sure Union. It is an inexpressible union, and therefore we must here give over speaking further to it, only locking to a word of it, *John 17. 21, 23.* in the 21. vers. saith our Lord: *That they all may be one, as thou father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us*: It's such an union by the Believers being in God and in the Mediator, as is that, whereby God and the Mediator are one, though no parity is here to be understood, but a resemblance only: and *vers. 23. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made Perfect in one*: *I in them*, here the union is most Immediat: *and thou in me*, there the Union is more mediat, viz. by Gods being in the Mediator dwelling in the Believer,

Believer, and the Believers dwelling in God, ( the fulness of the God-head being in the mediator ) by his meeting with God through faith in the Mediator : and indeed , were there no more but this, It saith that this Covenant is a good bargain.

The third Observation is, that *Union with the Lord by this Covenant is accessible to a run-away Sinner, that hath perverted his way, upon his coming aright to close with him therein on the terms of it.* Who are those coming here to Join in Covenant with the Lord ? It is, even those spoken of Jerem. 3. 6, 7. *Back-sliding Children, Treacherous dealers, who are bidden return , and he will heal their back-slidings :* which could not be , if this Covenant were not accessible to sinners : nay let me say , there is scarce any sort of sin , but the Lord out-faceth it in his Covenant, as we may see , Jer. 3. where the Lord saith , *Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, thou hast spoken and done evil as thou couldst ; yet wilt thou not from this time cry unto me , my Father ?* If we look to the grossness of sin , were it like Scarlet or Crimson, Isaiah 1. 18. *It shall be made white like Snow and Wooll : if ye be willing and obedient , saith the Lord, to close a Covenant with me, ye shall eat the good of the Land.* In the propounding of the Covenant , he will take away that exception of the grossness of sin , which might stand in the sinners way, were it even rotten Hypocrisy, detestable indifferency and luk-warmness in the matters of God, putting the Person in hazard to be spewed out of Christs Mouth, yet he saith even to such (if they will indeed take his counsell, and be content to have



their deadly evils removed and their wants supplied )  
*I counsel thee to come and buy of me Eye-salve, Gold,*  
*and Garments: and Behold I stand at the Door and*  
*knock, if any man will open the door, I will come in to him*  
*and Sup with him and he with me.* Only take this word  
of Advertisement here, and then I shall clear and con-  
firm the Doctrine further: when then we speak of sin-  
ners access to God by this Covenant, we mean, that there  
is access, only on Condition they take with their faults  
and come weeping, heart-broken and someway suitably  
affected with their sin; these only are the persons that  
may comfortably expect this access, he seeks after  
such, though he will find none such till he make them  
such. For further clearing and confirming of it then, we  
would consider these *Four* things. 1. Gods end in the  
Covenant, which will make out this, that there must  
be access to a run-away sinner by this Covenant to uni-  
on with God, when he comes home to him in the way  
of Repentance and Believing; because his end in the  
Covenant is to *save Sinners*, often spoken of; to *Justi-*  
*fy the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. To dwell with Rebels, Psal.  
68. 18. To get a Name and a Praise to himself of being  
gracious: as it cannot admit of, nor let in a sinner, but  
on this Condition; So it cannot but accept of a sinner  
having this condition. 2. We would consider Gods  
contrivance of the covenant in making it suitable to  
such an end, so as it may make the Riches of his Grace  
to shine, and may be effectually for the gaining of Souls;  
and therefore, 2 Sam. 23. 5. It is said in this respect,  
to be ordered in all things and sure: and Jere. 31. 33.  
compared with Heb. 8. The substance of it is set down  
compended in a few words, *I will Pardon their iniquity*  
*and remember their sin no more, &c.* 3. We would con-  
sider the administration of the Covenant; It's not in an  
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immediat way, as that first Covenant made with *Adam* was, wherein there was no mediator, neither was there need of any ; but it is in a mediat way by a suretie and Mediator, who hath taken on and engaged for the debt of the Covenanting sinner, and hath under taken for his thorow-bearing : now why is this administration and dispensation ? But because the Principall debtor is a bankerout and not able to Satisfie for himself ; therefore he hath access to come and get Pardon, and to be friends with God thorow the Mediator. 4. We would consider all the Properties of the Covenant, especially the freeness of it, and we will find that they speak out this ; It's a Covenant of *Sure Mercies*, *Isaiah 55. 3.* And all the Promises and Articles of it respect sinners, and hold forth this, that there is a way laid down, how a sinner at feud with God, may get this Union made up by Covenanting with him.

The fourth Observation is, that Covenanting with God is a very short cut for the quieting, peace, and happiness of a treacherous back sliding sinner : Therefore, when these People here spoken of are, in their Holy heat and warmth, stirred up under the conviction and sense of their guilt : as the short cut to come to peace and a happy condition, they say, *Come and let us Joyn our selves to the Lord in a Perpetuall Covenant.* It's the accepting of Gods offer, and being content to be his on the account of Christs righteousness, that they Propose to themselves as the ground of their calme, quietness, and happiness. This Observation implies these Three things. First, That Covenanting with God, doth fully make the Covenanter happie, though formerly he hath been a miserable sinner ; and O ! This is a good bargain, that makes a sinner compleatly happy : It makes him to say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there*  
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is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee : *Psalm. 73.* I shall name a few Scriptures to shew the full happiness of a sinner that enters in this Covenant : The first whereof is, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant well ordered in all things and sure, and this is all my Salvation, and all my desire : It's mensura Voti,* even all that heart can wish : and these words being considered as *David the sweet singer of Israel* his last words, when he is a dieing, they clearly imply a commendation of this Covenant as full for the happiness of a sinner. Another passage is, *Revel. 21. 7.* *He that overcometh shall inherit all things :* How is that ? even thus : *I will be his God and he shall be my Son,* that is, in substance ; I will declare my self to be in Covenant with him, This is the compend of the compleat happiness of Glorified Saints in heaven, and the begun happiness of Believers, of Sojourning Saints here on earth, in a less measure and lower degree ; for in Heaven God will be all and in all : and is not this a good bargain, & good to sinners ? which commends it the more. A Third Place is, *Rom. 8.* Where it's told us, that nothing can be laid to their Charge, But it's answered in this Covenant. They have a Cautioner to pay their debt ; and to strengthen them for their dutie : *I will (saith he) be their God and they shall be my People : I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me : I will pardon their iniquities, all bygones, and heal their back-slidings, they shall not get leave to go from me : would ye be pliable and yeelding to Gods Covenant ; I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and a new heart will I give unto them, and will cause them to walk in my Statutes and to do them.* Secondly, The Doctrine implies, as it is a full Covenant, or makes the Covenant

fully happy : So it makes him sickerly & surely happy :  
*2 Sam. 25. 5. It's a Covenant well ordered in all things*  
*and sure, who ever by Faith betake themselves to Christs*  
*righteousness, and lay hold on this Covenant, may ex-*  
*pect Communion with God as certainly as Adam be-*  
*fore the fall had it for it's the same God that promiseth*  
*who is as faithfull as ever he was : Hence it is called a*  
*word tryed as silver in a furnace seven times, a pure word*  
*that cometh out of the furnace alwayes as massie and*  
*weighty as it went in : and the ground of the Covenant*  
*being Christs satisfaction, it makes it Sure. Therefore*  
*he is called a tryed Corner stone, a sure foundation.*  
*Thirdly, It implies, that, as it is a Sure, So it is a*  
*compendious and speedy way to happiness & of deliver-*  
*ance to the Sinner, which maketh much for Gods praise:*  
*He is a very present help in time of trouble, or a speedy*  
*help, Psal. 46. So, Psal. 32. 5. I said (saith David)*  
*I would confess my transgression, and thou forgavest the*  
*iniquity of my sin : Immediatly (as if he had said)*  
*upon my confession, without longer delay : and Rom.*  
*4. 7. This Psalm is made use of, to demonstrat the*  
*Righteousness which is by Faith in Christ.*

The *fifth Observation* is, That sinners who are lying  
 under a quarrel with God and have the offer of a Cove-  
 nant, should betake themselves to it, and without delay  
 put a close to the bargain betwixt God and them. Come  
 (say they here) and let us join our selves to the Lord, in  
 a perpetuall Covenant, whereby is holden out, that  
 when a sinner hath access to the Covenant with God,  
 he should flee to it & take hold of it quickly. In this re-  
 spect, covenanting with God is compared to fleeing in to  
 the City of Refuge, *Heb. 6.* That which I mean, is first,  
 that a sinner, who hath this Covenant in his offer, should  
 take no other way for Justification and freedom from  
 sin



sin and wrath, but hold to this only and seek to be Justified by it. 2. That he should do it speedily : when the word of the Gospel saith Come, he should answer, *Lo I come unto thee*; when God by the Preaching of the Gospel maketh a gracious declaration, that he will accept of lost sinners that come to him, and saith, *This is the day of Salvation, this is the accepted time*; as it is, 2 Cor. 6. 3. and when by his ministers he waiteth on you, inviteth and wooeth you, ye should presently, without delay or demurr, close with the offer and accept of the invitation.

The sixth Observation is, that *Those who are convinced that they have sinned and would fain be in Covenant with God, should endeavour to have it throughed and made sure, to have it an absolutely closed and ended bargain.* This is very clear in this peoples practice, who concernedly say, *Come let us join our selves in a perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten*, they think they cannot get it made sure enough; and therefore they joyn, *never to be forgotten, to perpetuall*, they Judged that it could not Possibly be made too sure: which manifestly saith, that when God giveth an opportunity to enter into or renew a Covenant with him, we should be Holily solicitous, in very good earnest, and greatly concerned to have it made sicker, as the words is, *Nehemiah 9. vers. last, We make a sure Covenant and write it, and our Princes Levites and Priests Seal unto it*, that word *Isaiah 44. 5.* Is remarkable to this Purpose, *One shall say, I am the Lords, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord; That it might stand (as it were) over his head, as being formally and explicitly engaged in, with heart and hand: and they that know how fickle and inconstant their hearts are: and how prone to*

deal loosely and unfaithfully in Gods Covenant, have good reason to look to this, that all be sure work; that they get not the shell for the Kernell, and go not down to the grave with a lie in their right hand.

The *Seventh Observation* is, That *There are sometimes beside other times, wherein some People beside others have it pungently Put to them to enter in, and to renew their Covenant with God.* These here spoken of, who say (having Gods pressing call to it, before they said it one to another) *Come and let us join to the Lord in a Covenant;* are put to it more then others, and at this time more then at another: in a word People are then put to it in a more especiall manner, 1. At such a time when the Gospel is clearly, convincingly, and powerfully Preached unto them, Preaching of the Gospel being Gods way of meeting and treating with sinners, and the Ministers and Preachers thereof being as his ambassadours Commissioned and sent forth by him to treat, and close a treaty with sinners, on the terms contained in their Commission: which when they with suitable concernedness and earnestness do, their hearers are the more put to it. 2. They are thus put to it, when some stirring and warmth of affection towards Covenanting with God is wrought in them; or when their own frame, through Grace, Presseth them on to it; as we may see it did in this People. 3. When the Lord oftener then once or twice, in frequently renewed opportunities of this kind, Puts People to it; and more especially in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; the very sight and offer of the elements in the Communion speak plainly, on the matter, to the Communicants, are ye indeed in earnest in the great business of covenanting with God; Since ye are now to receive the Seal of it? If ye be not, ye notably Profane the Ordinance, by setting



setting a Seal to a blank charter : It is therefore called the *Covenant* ; *This is the Cup of the New Covenant* : Because it puts you in mind of the Covenant, and puts you to it, whether ye will really engage in it : It is like the Kings appointing a day for sealing of Pardons to Rebels ; his Proclamation *first* Puts them to it, to accept of the Pardon ; *Next* the heraulds put them to it : and then *Lastly* the set and fixed time or day of the sealing, puts them Most of all to it : and so it is with you in this Ordinance, that we are by and by to be about.

We come now to the *Application* of all , wherein we shall not insist on all things that these *Doctrines* Minister ground for : but shall Pitch on some most Usefull, and which are the great Scope of the Text and of the day.

And in the *First* place , I would *Beseech* you to endeavour to gather and compose Your selves, and gravely to ponder what it is , that this day ye are *Piessingly* called to ; It is even this, *Come and let us Join our selves to the Lord in a Perpetual Covenant* , never to be forgotten. Know and Believe , that there is such a thing as Covenanting with God ; That God is dealing with you to Covenant with him ; and that it is a good bargain : *To you is this word of Salvation sent* : And ye should be very Seriously thinking how to get it accepted and made use of ; how to receive this offer by Faith, and how to get your selves given up and away, to him ; because in this Covenant ( as I shewed before ) there is a Mutuall engaging ; God offers himself and all that is in him to be ours , and to be made forth coming for our good : and we by Faith close with the offer, and give up our selves to him to be at his dispose : have ye any serious thoughts of this ? Put your selves to it , and we  
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in the Name of the Lord put you to it, for we cannot well proceed any further, till ye be at some point in this: are ye in earnest? Is this your errand in being here to day? If not, why are ye come hither? Is it to see how the day goeth, or is it only to get your Communion, as ye use to speak? Alace! what's that? It's to Covenant with God, and ere ye depart this Place, to put it to a point, that it may be a closed bargain, that should be your errand.

And therefore in the *Second Place* we tell you, that the great God is content to Covenant with poor, feeble and sinfull Creatures, whereat ye may wonder, and say, *Is it so in very deed that God will dwell with men on earth?* Will he indeed Covenant with men, with sinfull men, with Treacherous dealing men, with backsliders? Yea we tell you, that it is so; he is content to be your God, and that ye possess all things in him, content to pardon you all your sins, to give you Grace and Glory, even every good thing: to enter you heirs to a Kingdome, and on good and easie terms: to do it freely *without Money, and without Price*, If ye be but indeed content to accept of His offer on his easie and very reasonable terms: and may not your very hearts laugh within you at the hearing of the glad tydings of this Covenant, and that God is yet content to make it up with you? O how sappie and Massie is this! and that is a very sweet word to this Purpose which we have, *Psal. 67. 6. God, even our own God shall bless us*, which may make the Believer smile: This relation of *our own* maketh the blessing double: and it flows from this formal, at least, real Covenanting and union with God, and the Believer hath a right to this and all things: He hath here an offer and another sort of right, then he hath to his house and land or cloths, it's a right to God, that giveth



giveth a right to these things, I mean a **Spiritual** right : for we speak not now of that which is civill : let us, therefore, flay our selves and wonder, and be stirred and affected with it, that the infinit and al sufficient God is content to make this good bargain, and even now to make it with us Sinners, even with insignificant and unworthy us.

*Thirdly*, We make proclamation of this bargain to you, and avouch, that there is Salvation offered to sinners, and to be had through Jesus Christ : the Lord alloweth and warranteth us to make this Proclamation, as well as he did *Jeremiah*, when he saith to him, *Chap. 3. 12. Go and Proclaim these words towards the North, return thou back-sliding Israel, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon thee, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever* : He alloweth, say he Peremptorily Commandeth that ye should be put to it : and therefore when we have laid the Covenant before you : what say ye to it, what will ye do ? We must have an answer from you : ye have his word and Oath for confirmation of it : O Believe and take hold of it, and ye shall get the seal from us as his Commissioners ; who treat with you, according to our Commission, in his Name ; And here we must be particular, and be ye particular with your selves : take and receive what we say to you with a warrant, as the word of the Lord, for it is no less his Word now, then it was when *Jeremiah* and the other Prophets spoke it, when the Apostles spoke it, yea When Christ spake it himself : It's the same Covenant and the same word, that this day is preached to you ; The Lord calls us to stir up our selves, and to say in good earnest, *Come let us joyn our selves to him in a Perpetuall Covenant*, 1. The party inviting is the Lord *Jehovah* in the Mediator, and sure he is a most,

most, yea *the* most excellent Party; *thy* maker (saith he *Isai.* 54. 8.) is *thy* Husband. 2. There are in this Covenant excellent Promises: God is content to be your God and to take you for his people and Spouse, to Pardon your iniquity, to heal your backslidings, to Sanctifie and save you, and to make you eternally happy: and are not these desirable? 3. It calls you to give your selves up to him: and indeed it is very reasonable, that if the husband give himself to the wife, she should give her self to him. Are ye then content to treat with God in the Mediator, and to be his on his own terms? It is good to meet and treat with God in him. Have ye any ground to except against this? Doth it please or displease you? say to it, tell your mind? For I declare to you, that if ye get him to be yours, you must needs be his. I fear many of you stand and stick at this, notwithstanding the high reasonableness of it: is this, think ye, an evil, disadvantageous, or Prejudicial exchange? whether is it better that the one and only true God reign over you, then that Satan and a multitude of strange Lords, your Lusts, taking the Throne (as it were) by turns, should reigne over you? It's both sad and stupendious, that ever this should be suffered once to come in question or debate; and yet, Alace! it's this, or some thing like this, at which it will stand: either ye will not take God for your God: or ye will not give your selves to him to be his People, on his own very reasonable and easie terms? and I trow, ye will make no better. I would, therefore, yet again put you to it: for it's the very thing that ye are called to, the great business of the day, and it's come even to the shock.

And therefore, labour to be at a point, whether ye will close with him or not: If ye will sincerely say, we  
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take the Lord to be our God, and give our selves to him, to be his People and servants: then we say to you, and assure you in his Name, that this Cup, that by and by ye are to drink, shall be according to his warrant, *The new Covenant in his Blood*. And to press you to the thing, let me but *Ask* you a few *Questions*. 1. Is there not need of Covenanting with God? Are there not many sins on your score? Is there not a quarrell betwixt God and you? Is not this bargain meet and suitable for you, which holds out remission of sins and peace with God? are ye not urgently called to it? And what ground of challenge will it be, think ye, that this was in your offer, and on very free and easie terms, and ye would not accept of it, but would needs destroy your selves? 2. If there be sin and a quarrell, is there not a necessity to have it taken away? Have ye laid your account and resolved not to be solicitous and carefull, whether ye be friends with God or not? And if ye will not say that, why do ye not enter this Covenant? 3. Is there any other way to get sin pardoned and the quarrell taken away, but by making sure your Covenant with God? *David* or any others that were saved, were they saved any other way? This Covenant was *all his Salvation and all his desire*. 4. What will ye say in the day of the Lord, when the Trumpet shall sound, and he shall call you to an account for refusing his free and Gracious offer; when there will be no more treating with you, when he shall say, and make your own Conscience say to you? It was plainly told you, that there was a quarrell standing betwixt me, and you; It was told you, that I was willing to enter into a Covenant with you, and to remove that quartell, I sent my Messengers unto you for this end, but ye made light of the matter: Say to it, O say to it; ye must say something,

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*Yea* or *Nay* ; ye are not left to be indifferent and to keep up your selves in this matter ; I tell you if ye say not *Yea* , ye say *Nay* ; and as the Apostle speaks, *Acts* 13 46. Ye pass sentence on your selves, and judge your selves unworthy of *Eternall* life : It's interpretatively a saying, that ye will not have Heaven and life thorow Christ : and therefore, as ye would not destroy your own Souls, I beseech you, nay I obtest you in the Name of the Lord and for his sake ; accept of this Covenant. We tell you and as the Apostle hath it, we say, *Be it known unto you* , that through *Jesus Christ* remission of sins is *Preached to you* : He hath purchased life and Salvation to sinners, And to you is the word of this Salvation sent: Give , O give your consent to the bargain , and that is all we seek of you.

Now to Prosecute this a little , and to put you yet further to it, because it will ly before God, whether we have put you to it or not , and whether ye have accepted of this Covenant or not : whether we were in earnest in Proposing it, and whether ye were in earnest in closing with it : Consider, 1. The Persons whom we put to this, and the things that we put you to. 2. The terms on which, 3. The grounds from which, and. 4. The qualifications and directions whereby.

*First*, As for the persons whom we put and press to this Covenanting with God : It's not those only who have gotten their tokens warranting them to come to the Table, nor those only that are debarred and so have got no tokens : but it's all of you , *Those who are afar off and near hand* : but differently : To the tender Soul, we say, come forward : to the secure we say, Humble your selves and then come and join in this Covenant. The thing we call you to, is to take the Lord to be your God , and to give up your selves to be Gods , we call you



you to take God to be your Master, and your Father, your Saviour, your Head, your Husband, your Friend, even your all, and that is no ill nor small offer: and we call you to give up your selves to God, to forsake your Fathers house, and all your kindred and to cleave to him: *to join your selves to the Lord*, as the Text hath it: and as it is said, *The Prodigall Joynd himself to a certain Citizen*, So ye would join your selves to the Lord, and be beholden to him for your life.

*Secondly*, As for the Terms, they are in short: that Seeing God saith, accept of my **Sons Righteousness**, and ye shall be my **Sons and Daughters**: ye would freely accept of it, and take and put **Christs Righteousness** in the place and Room of self-righteousness which was in the Covenant of works: found your plea before God on nothing that ye can do, but on **Christs doing and suffering** for you, which now by Faith ye resolve to adhere to, and resigne your selves to him without any reservation, to be guided and saved by him, in his own way.

As for the *Third*, How, or from and by what grounds we put you to this: or rather how doth the Lord put us all to it? *First*, Ye are put to it by his offer in the Gospel: which, in discretion, calls you to give him an answer; he cries, *Come unto me, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David*, And doth he not require an answer? And is it not incumbent to us who speak to you in his Name, to crave your answer? We declare to you all, that ye may if ye will, come to be joined with God in Covenant, and may be sure to be accepted of as his, if ye come aright; Now, what say ye to it? either ye must look on this as a cheat or cunningly devised fable, or if ye dare not look on it so, ye must accept of it and make it welcome. *Secondly*, Ye are put to it, in this respect, that the Lord brings

brings you now and then under some conviction of the necessity of your peace with God; something within you saith, that peace with God is worth the having and needfull, that this is a good bargain, and that ye have need of it, and there are now and then some raw resolutions to put it to a point; and it may be there is something presently that puts you to it; and if not, so much the more ye would put your selves to it; lest *the Kingdom of God be taken from you*. *Thirdly*, Ye are put to it by this same Sacrament; is it possible that ye can take the Communion for a Seal and confirmation, except ye Covenant with God before; If ye will not Covenant, ye prove your selves to be Treacherous dissemblers in going to the Communion, and to be liars to God; when he presents and offers his Covenant: ye profess to take his offer and to close the Covenant with him, but ye refuse, as it were, to take the Pen in your hand, or do throw it away: when he presents to you the Cup of the New Testament, ye drink the Wine and spill the Blood, and so become *guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, when ye despise it, and will not make use of it, nor Covenant with God that ye may get the use of it. And therefore, *Fourthly*, Know, that ye are put to it presently and peremptorily, & that the Lord will take it for a refusall and for a scorning and despising on your part, if ye do it not; and do ye think it a little matter to have such a guilt lying on your score? what know ye, if ever God shall offer to Seal a Covenant with you again? and therefore we put you to it peremptorily as to these *Three*. ¶ As to the thing, that when he invites, ye come, when he offers, ye receive and give the Lord your answer, not a *nay say*, but a *yea*, as ye will be answerable: and upon your saying *Yea* to this Covenant on his Terms, we declare in his Name, that



says *Yea* in taking in the sinner that fleeth unto him. 2. As to the whole of the thing; for ye must not half Gods Covenant; but as ye accept of God to be yours, so ye must give up your selves to him to be his; and as ye take Christ for paying of your debt; So also ye must take him to help you to do your duie; take all therefore, and submit your selves intirely to him in this Covenant. 3. As to the time, ye must do all this presently; for the Lord doth not allow us to give you an hour, or to promise to treat with you one hour after this; *It's now, come and let us join our selves to the Lord; It's no difficult thing that ye are called to; It's to believe with the heart, and to confess with the mouth our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is, Rom. 10. 9. The Object is Christ: the Condition is Faith, whereby he is griped and taken hold of, and which goeth out towards him in the word: And so ye have no more ado, but when the offer and Promise comes out, to accept and subscribe, and to say, I am the Lords, I will be his, to be saved by his Righteousness and made Holy by his Grace, both which are contained in the Covenant; I am content to be beholden to him both for Holiness and happiness; and it shall be a bargain. The Lord himself perswade you to do so, and that presently without delaying, dallying, or shifing and off putting.*

Now it may be, that some think this to be a good bargain, but they know not how to make it sure and sicker, so as it may hold for ever. And therefore this is the last thing, that in the 4th. Place, we would speak a little to, *viz. How shall a person Covenant with God, and know that he hath done so in very deed? (for the Directions how to Covenant are so many evidences of Covenanting, when performed:)* For *Directions* then in this matter; we would in generall, in the *First Place*, have

have ground to suppose and take it for granted that ye know what ye are, even sinners, and that Sin hath laid the Foundation of a quarrell betwixt God and you; and that ye know what he is a designing and doing by this Preached Gospel, even to bring sinners into this Covenant, and to have an union made up betwixt him and them: but ye will, belike, say, I know not how to make it sure: there is no answer to this, but, be doing, till ye get it made sure, for your unsureness must flow, either from something on Gods side, or from something on your side; ye dare not, I suppose, say that it flows from any thing on Gods side, or if ye should, this is the way to make him sure (to speak so;) and if it flow from something on your side, he bids you, *return back sliding Children, and he will heal your back sliding*, and make it sure. But in the Next Place and more particularly, consider, 1. Your end and designe, what ye would be at; ye may have some generall aim at something that is good in it self; but that is not enough, there must be something more Particular and peculiar: Is it to get God to be your God? Doth that fill your eye? Is it to get your back slidings healed as well as pardoned? That is right, if your aim be to have God and Spirituall good; I mention this the rather, because some may love God and the Covenant, for some temporall good; whereas others love him and his Covenant mainly for a Spirituall good, and think themselves well come to and made up thereby. Wherein lyes the difference will ye say; I answer in a word, to love God and the Covenant only or mainly for temporall mercies, is ill and selfish: but to love God and his Covenant, to be made thereby really happy in the enjoyment of him, and to be made conform to him in Holiness, is good and desirable, and neither selfish nor servile and mercenary.



mercenary : as it is no unkindlie-like token in a wife to love her Husband , to be delighted in him, and to like well to enjoy his company : so it is a kindly like Mark for a soul to love God, on the account of the happiness and Holiness that are to be had in him, and from him : Love to God shoulders not out all regard and love to our selves simply, but it shoulders out love to lusts, and all inordinat love to self and to every Idol , nay it's inconsistent with true love to God not to care whether we be happy in the enjoyment of him or not. 2. Consider how , and by what means , and on what terms ye seek to come at that end : are ye secure , and senseless of your sin & misery without God ? It's very like, that ye make but a blind bargain whereof ye will have no reall advantage ; but have ye any kindly touch of your sin and misery , and of your need of a Saviour ; and have ye recourse to him, as one *Able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God thorow him , and who lives for ever, to make intercession for them ?* Ye may know somewhat of your sincerity in Covenanting with God by the way that ye come to him. 3. What use make ye of the Mediator, when ye are come to him ? Is your peace with God, and your hope of holding by the bargain grounded on him ? Do ye lay the weight of all the good ye expect on his mediation, on his Satisfaction and intercession , on his purchase ? Do ye hold all thorow him ? That's a good token. 4. Are ye content to give to God, as well as to take from him ? To devote your selves to him for Service as well as to enjoy him and Happiness in him ? This also is a good token, as well as a direction. 5. Are ye in much Holy fear and Jealousie of backsliding ; and is it in your eye and aim purposely to Article this with the Lord , *to put his fear in your heart , that ye may not depart from him ;* many persons will sometimes

sometimes in a warm fit, or in a good mood ( as we use to speak ) come far on, as *Agrippa* did, but quickly fall off, and return to their wonted byass, coldness and indifferency; therefore in your Covenanting with God, there would be much Hely fear, lest it be not sound, lest it hold not; let your Soul say, now I am absolutely and unreservedly given away to God, not by *Morgage* or *Wodset* only ( to speak so ) but without reversion; even for ever. 6. Ye would come to close actually with God himself in Covenant: many come to the word and Sacrament to get, as they think, some good, but come not to the Covenant, to be really and perpetually Joyned to the Lord himself. 7. Ye would seek after some heart warming, by Gods Spirit within you, and some lively exercise of your faith in him, as ye see to be in this Peoples case. 8. Persons that are in earnest will be much affected with bygone slips, failings and unfaithfull dealings with God, and are afraid of falling back and of dealing loosely with the Lord; and this puts them on to be more Solicitous and careful to take on the mo bands, and to cast the knot the faster because the heart is deceitful; Come ( say they here ) *and let us Join our selves to the Lord, in a Perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten*; They are not content with a Covenant, except it be fiker; the heart protests against it self if it shall draw back, and resignes and renounces its liberty to do so any more, if it may be called liberty. 9. A person would aim to have himself sure and satisfied as to this, that he hath really given his consent, that he may have quietness in the assurance of its being so; yet not laying the weight of his Peace on his clearness and assurance: but because his comfort much depends thereon, therefore he will endeavour to have any blank filled up, and the business put to a point.



he comes to this Covenanting with Holy fear, self-suspicion and jealousy : and goeth from it with fear ; and as he is attended with this fear in Covenanting , so in receiving the Sacrament the Seal of the Covenant ; *Come* ( say they ) *and let us join our selves to the Lord, in a perpetuall Covenant that shall never be forgotten ;* O ! So sure as they would have it ; ye who shall thorow Grace come thus, shall find the Lord Jesus waiting and ready to welcome you.

But it's like, ye will *Ask*, how is the Sacrament made useful and helpful in this joyning to the Lord in Covenant ? *I Answer* in generall, as to the Believer, that all the Promises are his, and it Seals all the Blessings of the Covenant to him, Because the condition of the Covenant is found in him ; Even as a pardon given to a Rebelle on condition he lay down his Arms, when he doth lay them down and accepts of the Pardon, the Seal is appended to it, which makes it firm and sure. But what if the persons doubt of their having entered into the Covenant ? *Answer* 1. They are either such as are meer strangers to God and have no desire after nor respect to the Covenant, those are under Gods curse and shall get no good of the Sacrament, because they resolve not to take Christ to fulfill the condition of the Covenant in them, and are not in earnest to be in under the bond of the Covenant ; yet if even such would seriously resolve to fulfill the condition, or rather to take Christ to help them to fulfill it, they should be welcome : or they are such as are doubting, though they have some honest desire ; such would remember, the bargain is Mutuall, and they must engage to God, if they would have God engaged to them ; and if ye have not done it before, do it even now, and the Sacrament shall be usefull and helpfull to you, in these respects  
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more *Particularly*. 1. For sealing this general truth *If I believe in Christ I shall have eternal life*; In which respect, it's like a pardon offered to a Rebelle on condition he lay down his Arms; he would first see it writ, and then he would have it Sealed, well (saith the King) ye shall get it Sealed. 2. It's usefull and hath influence in a Moral way, to make you accept Pardon, and to enter in the Covenant; In which respect, it's an argument, as to allure the Rebelle to accept of the Pardon, So to perswade and assure him, that on his acceptance he shall have it actually and certainly when it's holden forth Sealed: for, saith the Lord, In the Sacrament, ye have my Covenant, and here I am ready to seal it. 3. It furthers our joining in Covenant In respect of its clear holding forth and manifesting the blessings of the Covenant; the word saith, that ye are Sinners, and that ye will get nothing that is truly good but in and through Christ: and that God is content to Covenant with you, and to Pardon your sins through him: and the Sacrament brings Christ and the blessing of the Covenant to be some way visible and sensible to you: and the Gospel tells, how it is done. 4. In the Sacrament the Lord condescends in the most familiar way to Covenant: for in it he saith take you my Son's blood to wash you who are guilty and filthy: and your taking is, as it were, a striking of hands with him, and a saying, content Lord, let this blood wash me: and by looking to the word of institution, which gives footing to Faith, and exercising Faith thereon as your warrant, your Faith is helped to take hold of Christ by and in the Sacrament. 5. It helps to close with the Covenant by letting you see the grounds of the Covenant, whereon it is bottomed and built. If thou shouldst say, Though God would Covenant with me, I will not keep: The

Sacrament



Sacrament holds out Christ as Cautioner, that hath put himself in our Room and engaged in our Name to make us forth-coming, and if thou shouldst yet say: will God indeed accept of the like of me? It saith, here is a broken and bleeding Saviour and Mediator to lead thee to God, a Saviour who hath made himself a propitiation for sin: and hereupon the sinner may be strengthened to take hold of the Covenant, because in the Sacrament he sees Christ himself laid as a bridge, on which he may come over to God, and his rent flesh as the *Vail* through which he may, as by a new and living way, enter into the Holiest.

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Jeremiah 50. Vers. 5.

----- Come, and let us Joyn our selves to the Lord, in a perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.

S E R M O N IV.

**T**Here are Two main and Mighty uptaking Businesses, to the People of God; The one whereof is, how to win to be in Covenant with God, to be friends and in good terms with him. The other is, how to stand to, and keep Covenant with him, and to live as being made friends with him according to the obligation that lyeth on them. This is the  
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great designe of all preaching, to bring them within the Covenant, who are without : and to make those who are within the Covenant , to walk suitably to it ; and as these are never separated on the Lords side : So should they never be Separated on our side therefore these People are brought in here Saying *Let us Join our selves to the Lord in a Covenant :* and not only So , but there are *Two* words added by them, to shew their earnest desire to keep and stand to the Covenant : The one is, *A perpetuall Covenant :* the other, a *Covenant that shall not be forgotten*, the impression whereof may never wear away : and this we conceive to be their meaning, 1. Because to forget the Covenant, in Scripture, is to deal falsely in it, and to forget the Covenant and to break it , are the same. 2. Because it is ( as we take it ) opposed to their fear of false dealing in the Covenant : as if they had said , we were once in Covenant with God, but we did deal falsely in it and forget it : Let us now therefore *Join our selves in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten* , Let it be constant and standing, a lasting, even an everlasting bargain.

This being the meaning of the Words, we shall speak to *Four Observations* from them ( the Substance whereof ye have heard touched on already ) and these are.

*First*, That *The great hazard which a People Covenanting with God are in , is to slip and slide from their eye and engagement to him, and to forget the Covenant.*



The Second Is, That The great evidence of right entring in Covenant wit<sup>h</sup> God, i to be serious and much concerned in keeping of it, even as much as in entring into it.

The Third is, That The great designe and dutie of a Covenanter with God is, never to forget the Covenant, but freshly to remember it, So as to be answerable to it in Practice.

The Fourth is, That The great mean whereby this designe is got prosecuted and this dutie formed, is adhering and cleaving to God, according to the Covenant. Let us (say they) join to the Lord in a Covenant; In this respect, adhering to him in it is the mean to keep Covenant; So as we may never fall from it.

The First Observation then is, that The great hazard that a People Covenanteeing with God are in, is to slip and fall from their engagement to him: or There is such a Covenanteeing with God, as people may soon forget and fall from: a Temporary and unsiker Covenanteeing, that holds not: A perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten, Supposeth that there is a sort of Covenanteeing that slips like a knotless thread (to speak so) and abides not. This is sadly verified in the experience of many common professors of Religion, and often even of the Godly themselves in a measure; Even now there will be a bargaining with God, and within a litle they will forget it: Peter saith, Though all should forsake thee, yet will not I, And yet within a very litle he is found sleeping, and that same night denies and forswears his

Master: so Deut. 5. the People say, *all that the Lord hath Commanded us, we will do*, and the Lord saith, *they have well said, O that there were such a heart in them*: and yet within the space of little more then fourtie days, they set up a golden Calf for their God: So Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. *When he slew them, then they sought him: they returned and enquired early after God: they remembered that God was their Rock, and the most High their Redeemer; but they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their Tongue, for their hearts were not right with God, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant, they abode not by the mint and essay which they made.* But I think this is beyond any need of Proof; we rather stand in need to have the impression of it made deep upon our hearts; and to go from the work we have been about with Holy fear and jealousy over our selves, bespeaking our selves thus, *what if this engagement, we have come under, hold not, but prove like the bringing down of the head like a Bulrush for a day?* Serious thoughts of this hazard would thorow Gods blessing, further the exercise of watchfulness a great deal more; when Carnal Self-Confidence and fearlesness creep on & take hold of us, we (as it were) lay aside our Armour, foolishly fancying that there is no hazard but that all will be well; were there more of this Holy fear, there would not be such frequent surprizes; have ye not often been surprized and proved unstedfast in Gods Covenant? And since ye have so many and clear proofs of the truth of this Do-

ctrine



Arise in your own sad experience, is there not the greater need of Holy fear and watchfulness?

The Second Observation is, That, *Those who are sincere and Serious in Covenanting with God, will be no less so, in keeping of and standing to it.* Where People are sound and Honest at the heart, it will be no less an up-taking work to them, how to keep Covenant, then it was to get it entered in; Therefore these here mentioned have it as one peece of their Seriously uptaking business, how to be joined to the Lord in Covenant; and another, how to get it stood to, so as it may be a perpetual one never to be forgotten: the Same reasons that prove that there should be, or that there is Seriousness in making & closing the Covenant, will also prove that there should be, and will be seriousness in endeavours to keep it; for if the Person honestly mind to enjoy the Blessings Covenanted, he must and will endeavour to keep and stand to the Covenant; If he honestly mind and sincerely desire to be in good terms with God through the Covenant, he must and will endeavour to stand to the Terms of the Covenant, and breach of Covenant will waken a Challenge. If it be a Principle of true saving Grace that puts a person to desire to be under the bond of Gods Covenant; that same Principle will make him desire and endeavour to abide under that bond, and to keep faithfully to him; Thus David saith, *Psal. 119. vers. 29. 30. I have chosen the way of thy precepts; and I have stuck unto thy testimonies:* There is a choosing of the Covenant and Testimonies, and a designe of sticking to them, when upon choice closed with.

The Use of this Point serves for *Instruction*: would ye saie have a mark of your honesty in Covenanting with God? Here it is, and we know no better mark or

evidence to give you then this, even to be serious and much concerned in keeping Covenant: God will never account that man to be a true Covenanter, that will cast his law behind his back. The Apostle James Chap. 1. Speaks of two sorts of men that are hearers of the word, and he compares the one sort, viz. Forgetful hearers, to a man, *Who beholding his naturall face in a glass, goes away, and straightway forgets what manner of man he was*; but the other sort are such, *who are not only hearers but doers of the word*: that man (saith he) shall be *Blessed in his deed*: It is not the sayer, but the doer and the keeper of the words of the Covenant, that is blessed: as many as Seriously engage to God, are put on (as we said before) with as much seriousness, in endeavouring the performance of their engagement, as to come under it: I speak not of a Perfect performance or fulfilling of engagements without any the least defect, that is not to be win at here: but of Serious minding and endeavouring, in the Lords strength, the Performance of that which we are engaged to: For there is a great difference betwixt mens failing and slipping of infirmity, and their sinning with allowance: the former sheweth a body of Death to be yet remaining, and may consist with faithfulness in Gods Covenant: but the latter speaks out a Slothful careless and negligent undervaluing of God and of his Covenant: let never such a man cloke himself with the pretext of being in Covenant with God, nor Palliate his palpably gross and voluntary breaches of Covenant, with the pretext of infirmity, who doh not seriously drive it as his great designe, to be faithfull in Gods Covenant.

Now would ye know, wherein this Seriousness in keeping and Performing Covenant consists. Ye may take



take it in these Characters. The man that is Serious in performing his engagement, 1. His heart is taken up with it, and there is an ardent longing to be answerable to the Covenant that he is entered into with God; His greatest wish in all the world is, as to be in it, so to be faithfull in keeping it; therefore saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 119. 5. O that my wayes were directed to keep thy statuts*; and this is given as a mark of the *Blessed man who is undefiled in the way*: and saith he vers. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandments*; which is a reason of the former, and a confirmation of it; he designs to be short in his obedience to no command, and he does not allow himself in his short-coming even as to degree, but is constant in pursuing his designe *always even unto the end*. 2. Seriousness in performing appeareth, by kindly acknowledging the impression of the weightiness of the tie and obligation that the Covenant lays on Persons; it someway affects and burdens them, so that they walk not so lightly as others do under the obligation & debt of the Covenant; though it be a friendly debt, and also a Priviledge: Their burden is not, that they are under the obligation, but how to get it performed; thus saith the Psalmist, *Psa. 56. 12. Thy vows are upon me, O God*: they take on vows to God, and keep them on, and walk, as being under them: this is a main thing to be looked to in keeping Covenant. 3. This seriousness in performing, appears in the fear that persons have of going wrong and Mis-carrying; they are afraid to break to God: neither are any so suspicious of them, as they are of themselves, knowing by sad experience, that their *hearts are deceitful above all things*: and this is a very native evidence, considering what we heard of our sickleness, which cannot be without the impression of fear.

4. It appears in a Holy carefulness and diligence to prevent that which they fear: lest at any time they let a buckle slip (to speak so) and lest that which they feared come on them, their fear puts them to diligence to prevent the thing feared: This makes them to fast and Pray, and to be watchfull over themselves in loose and untender company, and to eschew them as far as they can, and to bazard some loss, rather then to put themselves under a snare; watching and praying lest they fall into the sin of dealing falsely in Gods Covenant. 5. It appears in the sharpness of challenges, when any thing miscarries in their hand: They are soon challenged for the very first beginnings of a breach: a wrong look will affect them: therefore saith *Job, Chap. 31. I made a covenant with my eyes, why then should I look upon a maid?* And the heart, while tender, will loath and scare at the least thing that hath the remotest tendency towards a breach, were it but the appearance of evil: Any the least guilt soon toucheth and smiteth them, not only that which is their down, but even that of others: Thus good *Ezra saith, Chap. 9. Should we again break thy Commandments, and joyn in affinity with the people of these Abominations?* And he lyeth in the dust before God mourning, because of this. 6. It appears in respect of the exercise of a persons Faith: as It's an up-taking work and busiess to honest Souls, to get their Faith founded rightly in closing the Covenant with God, that they be well grounded in believing: So it is no less an up-taking and exercising work, to be improving their faith on Gods Promises, to make them forth-coming according to their engagement and for keeping Covenant: which is the Apostles exercise, *Gal. 2. 20. To live by Faith on the Son of God: I am (saith he) Crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth*



liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, is by Faith on the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me: and try it who will, they shall find it to be an uptaking work, rightly to exercise Faith for entertaining of Spiritual life, and for preventing a Covenant breach with God. It may be, for as many Professed Covenanters as are here, that but few of you know much, if any thing at all, what it is to be taken up with being Answerable to the Covenant according to your engagements: this, no doubt, makes much unsound work, that ye do not singly and seriously designe this: that ye reach not forward, that ye bear not down the body, and bring it under Subjection, lest ye come short here. If ye were suitably serious, these Characters and evidences might be as so many directions to you: there would be much watchfulness in doing; ready entertaining of challenges and convictions: much heart melting under the sense of wrongs done to God: and the very appearances of evil would be feared at and appear terrible. There is an evil readily incident to many Professors of Religion, that they would faine be at marks of a good Spirituall state and of being in Covenant with God, but such as would not disturb their carnal confidence, ease, and laziness, nor put them on to painful diligence: but we have no such marks to give: neither dare we for the fear of God, and because of the hazard of Soules, assigne any such; there being none such given or assigned in the word of God: nay let me tell you, that if there be not Painfull diligence and Faithfulness in keeping Covenant with God, it will darken the light of any other mark that can be given: and no doubt, it's this negligence and unfaithfulness that makes many good marks, clear in themselves, dark to many Christians, while they give not diligence to make their

calling and election sure, and give not all diligence to add one Grace to another, and one degree of Grace to another: It is also the cause of uncomfortable walking, yea of uncomfortable Communicating: but to be sincere & serious in owning our Covenant engagements, and faithfully forth-coming in the Fruits thereof, and in a correspondent conversation, is a mark that will give comfort, and some quietness at least, till Comfort come: the Lord will comfortably confess such as faithfully confess him.

The *Third Observation* is, that *It is and will be the great study of Persons really entered in Covenant with God, to have it an abiding bargain, a perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten*: This is their designe as well as their duty, that their Practice and walk may be suitable to the Covenant. And it being the main thing implied in the words, and that which we intend to insist on: I shall in the prosecution of it, speak a little to these *three*. 1. To what it is to aim to have Gods Covenant perpetual, and never to be forgotten. 2. To the reasons and the ground that there is to press this. And 3. To some motives and encouragements for exciting to it.

For the *First*, viz. What it is to study to have Gods Covenant Perpetuall and never to be forgotten? We take it up in these particulars. *First*, That those entered in Covenant would drive the great designe of the Covenant; which it Summed in these *Two words*, To have God to be ours, and our selves to be Gods; It's even that which we have in Answer to the first question of our excellent *Catechism*, What is Mans chief end? To enjoy God, and to glorifie him; to enjoy him as our own God, and to glorifie him, by acknowledging our selves to be his, and by devoting our selves to his Service, as being a People formed for himself, to shew forth  
his



his praise; This should be vigorously driven, as the great designe of the Covenant with God; and it would be a notable help to keep Covenant: even to live and walk, So as we may have Gods Company: for what Use serves Gods Covenant unto us, and our entering therein, if we continue as great strangers to him as before? If this be not driven as our designe, we forget wherefore we Covenanted. Secondly, There would be a minding of our own obligation to the Covenant, as the condition or mean by which the end, viz. The enjoying of God, is come at; which is in a word, to be his, to walk before him, as he willeth Abraham to do, *Walk before me and be thou Perfect*, God himself is that which the Covenant should Principally aim at; & walking before him is the mean appointed for coming at that end; in short, what ever the Covenant saith in reference to our duty; as to abandon Lusts, *To be Holy in all manner of Conversation: to be watchful: to glorifie God in our Bodies and Spirits which are his, &c.* Is that which we are tyed to in the Covenant, and which we would seriously drive at as our great designe. Thirdly, There be a minding and remembring of Gods engagement to us in the Covenant, which is a part of it, as well as our engagement to him; and never to be forgotten by us: *Return* (saith the Lord, Jer. 3.) *Back-sliding Children, and I will heal your Back-slidings: Return, for I am Married to you: I will be your God and guide even unto Death: I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, &c.* And this minding and remembring of Gods part of the Covenant, is a crediting of his Promise; Many Believers mind and remember their own part of the Covenant, but forget that God is tyed to them: which is to Remember, not a Mutuall engagement, such as the Covenant bears out, but only our own Particular engagement,

engagement, which makes us have so many failings on our side, and doth very much weaken our hands in dutie; because we lay not the weight of our performances on God that hath Promised, *who is faithful and will also do it*: We will find it to be frequent and familiar to the Saints mentioned in Scripture, to mind Gods part of the Covenant as well as their own, and Particularly to David in the Book of Psalmes, who saith, *Thou hast made a Covenant with thine anointed: Thou hast laid help upon one that is Mighty: art not thou from Everlasting our God? Lord remember thy Covenant, that is the Covenant that God hath made with his People; and of elsewhere.* The great weight of a Believers life and consolation lyes here: Alace! what would our life, or our engagement be, and what would our Comfort and Hope be, without his engagement to us in the Covenant? And if this be not suitably minded and remembered it will prove but a very heartless bargain. *Fourthly,* It implies this, Seriously to endeavour to conform our Practice to the many great Obligations that we ly under to him, and which Gods offer and Covenant do on many accounts call us to. This is a short hint of what it is to keep and do the Covenant of God, and to Perform it alway even unto the end, to have his Covenant Perpetual, and never to be forgotten.

As for the Second, To wit, the grounds and reasons of this, and whereby it may be pressed. *First.* We would think of and believe the reality of Gods Covenant, the reality of the promises in it, and of all that is spoken of it; and would put our selves to it, if indeed we look on it as such. The truth is, it is the Language of our unbelief, that we scarcely think God to be in earnest; as if all that is spoken of his Covenant were but a cunningly devised Fable: If we really believed, that



that by his Blessed Covenant ; we may be brought to enjoy God and to be made conform to his Image in Holiness : to have our vile bodies at last made conform to his Glorious Body, &c. And that as certainly we shall be possessed of such great and glorious priviledges by keeping this Covenant , as we are certain that this world is yet standing ; such a Faith would prove to us the evidence of things not seen, and the Substance of things hoped for : and would be a notable incitement and sharp Spur to Holy activitie in , and to quick dispatch of called for duty : O ! But it be a good and reall bargain, and will have wonderfull following , to all that keep it : and whether this be now Believed or not , it will be found a litle hence, that this bargain was one of the best that ever was heard tell of in the world. Secondly, We would seriously bethink our selves. what will come of it, in case there be Grossly unfaithfull dealing , and unstedfastness in Gods Covenant. I shal only name these five things that will follow on it. 1. Much sin. 2. Much shame. 3. Much reflection on God. 4. Much wrath, and. 5. Much want of peace , and much anxiety in the Conscience, that is guilty of this sin. 1. I say, much sin : better there had never been a Covenant in your offer , and that ye had never protest your entering into Covenant with God : *It's better (saith the wise man, Eccles. 5. 5.) not to vow to God, then to vow and not to perform :* It had been better that many of you had been crushed in your Mothers belly, or that ye had been born *Turks and Pagans* , and had lived and died so , then to be found among them that deal falsly in Gods Covenant. The grossest sins of *Pagans* are in some respect as no sins in comparison of this, *John 15. 22.* 2. There will be much shame before God, even shame and confusion of Face , everlasting shame : they shall rise from  
the

*the dead to shame and everlasting contempt, Dan. 12.* Sinners will have much shame ere all be done, for every sin, But such as have wickedly betrayed their trust to God, and after they had made Profession of entering in Covenant with him, have dealt Perfidiously and falsely in it, will be in a manner hissed at amongst devils and reprobate Pagans, who never had such offers, neither made such Professions: and their condemnation will be acknowledged to carry eminent and conspicuous desert in it: Because such had a good bargain, and dealt treacherously with God, and quite marred it to themselves: they have often also much shame amongst men, even here: *The man (saith Christ) That hears my sayings and does them not, is like unto a foolish builder, that builds his house on the sand: and elsewhere he resembles rash engagers in professing Covenanting with him, to men who sit not down to count the cost, that begin to build, and not being able to finish, expose themselves to the Mockage, Scorn and Derision of all that pass by: Such and such a man (will some be ready to say) was a great Professor, but now behold what is become of him, take him up yonder, he seemed once to have some tenderness, but now he is quite turned aside, and become gross and loose: Men of any Morall honesty and ingenuity will be ashamed to break their word & to violate their engagements one to another in worldly matters: how much greater shame is it to break to God, and to deal falsely in his Covenant? 3. It hath deep reflections upon God: for the Covenant-breaker saith on the matter, that it repents him that ever he made it, for he hath never gotten good of it, and that God hath not been faithfull in keeping to him, and that therefore he thought himself loosed from all its Obligation: Now will any of you dare to say, that the Covenant is*

not



not a good bargain, or that God is not a good, respos-  
sible and faithfull party to deal with? *What iniquity*  
*have your Fathers found in me* (saith the Lord to his  
Professing people, *Jer. 2.*) *that they are gone so far*  
*from me? Come* (saith he *Micah 6.*) *Before the Moun-*  
*tains, and let the Hills hear my Controversy with you, what*  
*iniquity have ye found in me? wherein have I wearied*  
*you, testifie against me.* Sure, all that depart from God,  
rub reproach on Gods Covenant as a bad bargain, and  
on God as a bad and unfaithfull party to deal with: O  
high and horrid practical Atheisme and Blasphemy!  
Doubtless such will find that they have played the fools  
egregiously in Committing these two great evils, in for-  
saking God the Fountain of living waters, and in digging  
to themselves Cisterns, even broken Cisterns that could  
hold no water: O! If ye could Imagine, what ye will  
think of it ere long, when ye will not get a drop of wa-  
ter to cool your tongue, because ye said by your practice,  
that God was not worth the having, *And to the Al-*  
*mighty, depart from us, we will have none of thee, nei-*  
*ther will we have the knowledge of thy ways.* 4. Much  
want of peace and much anxietie will follow upon it,  
even the penitent and converting People of God, *Jer.*  
*3. 20, 21.* have much bitterness on this account of  
Treacherous dealing in Gods Covenant: *a voice of weep-*  
*ing and Lamentation is heard on the mountains, the Chil-*  
*dren of Israel saying, we have perverted our way, we have*  
*forsaken the Lord our God,* how much more bitterness of  
another nature, how much more Smart, vexation,  
Anguish, Agony, and gnawing of Conscience shall im-  
penitent sinners have, on account of their false and Per-  
fidious dealing in Gods Covenant? This will make the  
hearts of many to quake and tremble for terror: If ye  
get Repentance, it will be a heart-break to you; and

if

if ye get not repentance, much heart less heart-break and crushing is abiding you to the end for evermore; and O what trembling of heart, failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind may be betwixt and that! 5 Much wrath will follow on it in the day of the Lord, if it be continued in; and judge ye with'n your selves if there be so many aggravations of, or so many threatnings against any sin, as of and against unfaithfull, and false dealing in Gods Covenant; this sin hath made the Jews to lye, these Sixteen hundred years and above, Scattered among all Nations as a curse: Therefore make it your great designe and business now, to be Faithful to God, and to have the Covenant with him, *A perpetual Covenant, never to be forgotten.*

As for the *Third*, viz. Some motives and encouragements to excite you to be Faithful in Gods Covenant and to study to have it *A perpetuall Covenant never to be forgotten*; consider in the *First* place, that it is a singularly good and none-such bargain to them that keep Covenant, there is no bargain more lovely to them that keep touches with God; It's (saith dying David, 2 Sam. 23.) *all my Salvation and all my desire*, It hath all things in it that my heart can wish; we make a pitifull and poor life to our selves thorow our undervaluing Gods Covenant; the Believer, by improving of it, might have (as we use to speak) a Lords life, yea a Kings life, yea a life infinitely preferable to the life of all the great men, and Monarchs on earth; *having all things, though Possessing nothing*, as it is, 2 Cor. 6. 10. and saith the Apostle, Philip. 4. *I have all, I abound and have no lack*, while, in the mean time, he was living on a little Charity from others; we might have a good life here and hereafter: do'h it not exceedingly Commend Gods Covenant, that neither Sicknes,

Poverty,



Poverty, Reproach, Contempt, Persecution, nor Death it self, though violent and Bloody, can marr this excellent life? when the Covenant comes to Judgment, *who can lay any thing to his Charge? It is God that Justifieth, who shall condemn him?* He hath a friend before him, *Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant*, and is in good terms with God; The great advantage of it in this life and in that which is to come (for godliness is great gain, having the promise of both) may abundantly commend the Covenant and Faithfulness in it: I am perswaded, there is no suiter or wooer to court and put in for the sinners heart & affection, that can possibly out-bid Gods Covenant, can the *Lust of the eye, the Lust of the flesh or the Pride of life*, can Profit, Pleasure, or Preferment make such Proffers? Is there such advantage to be had in serving them, as there is to be had in serving God? By the one, *Ye bring forth fruit unto Holiness and in the end reap Eternal Life*; but by the other, *Ye sow to the flesh, and shall of the flesh reap Corruption*, a poor and hungry Harvest. Secondly, The very keeping of Covenant with God, is in it self an advantage? It hath a great reward in the bosom of it; for it puts the Person to love God, to delight in him, to place its happiness in him; to study Holiness and Mortification of Sin; and is there not great advantage in these? can ye think or say, that there is any prejudice in these and such things as these, namely to be blameless in your Conversation; to be sincere and not a Hypocrite, to be serious and not Luk-warm? I am perswaded, that if ye will but put it seriously to your own Consciences, ye will be forced to say, that Sincerity in Religion is better then Hypocrisie, and stedfastness in Gods Covenant, then Treachery, and what more do we call for? And Therefore let me, on this ground, and as ye would not come

come in Tops with your own Consciences, beseech you to study Faithfulness in the Covenant : Gods Covenant hath a great advantage of the hearers of it, and of professed engagers in it ; even a friend in their bosoms, *viz.* Conscience, that will side with it, and say, that it was a good bargain, that the terms were very reasonable, & that no prejudice could come by it, but unspeakably much advantage; & will tell the man, that it would have been his honor and for his profit, to have kept it and to have been faithful in it; why then, will the Lord say, didst thou deal falsely in it, and renounce it? The wretched mans Conscience will answer, that there was no shadow of reason for it, it was plain Folly and madness, for to keep and do Gods Covenant and Commandments, is Peoples wisdom before all Nations; Deut. 4. It is a sad matter, that when men may have that which is infinitely preferable to what they are so eager in seeking after: even true Riches, Pleasure and honour, Peace that passeth all naturall understanding, Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, and every good thing, by Covenanting with God and by faithful dealing therein, that they should not drive this as their great designe, and make it their great work and uptaking business; O That there were such a heart in them (saith the Lord, Deut. 5.) That they might fear me and keep my Commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever; Men are ready to say, we must provide for our Families, and under that Specious pretext they shift this main work; but Ah! fools that they are, there is no way comparable to this, to provide for families and Children, even to have themselves and their Children entred into Gods Covenant and made to deal faithfully in it; this engageth him to provide for and become tutor unto the Mans Children; and is there

not



not great encouragement here, to have every good thing bestowed, and all carking care and anxietie concerning our selves and Children removed? *Thirdly*, We would consider, that God is a singular good Party to deal with, very tender of them that aim to deal honestly with him; he is indeed severe and terrible, when he becomes the avenger of a broken Covenant; but he is most tender towards honest engagers, who sincerely endeavour to keep touches with him, he is no rigid interpreter of their actions, but is ready to put the best sense on them that they are capable of; *Like as a Father* (saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 103.*) *Pitieth his Children, so doth the Lord Pitié them that fear him*; He is a father that will take little off the hand of his Children, when he knows them to have a will to the work, when he will not deal so with others; *all his wayes are mercy and truth to them that keep his Covenant and his Testimonies*; It's not meant of such as keep it Perfectly; for so they needed not Mercy, but of them that honestly designe and endeavour to keep it; and may not that encourage to be faithfull in Gods Covenant, that he is so easie to please? *Fourthly*, Consider, that he hath graciously stuffed his Covenant with Promises meet for the thorow-bearing of them that would fain keep Covenant: if it be an evil heart that will not love God, which troubles them, the Promise is, *I will Circumcise their heart and the hearts of their seed to love the Lord their God*; Whereas no others, who are without the Covenant, or deal unfaithfully in it, can expect the performance of any such Promise. If it be a back sliding heart, the Promise is, *Jer. 3. 22. I will heal your back-slydings*: If it be the fear of departing from God that troubles them, the Promise is, *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me*; If it be the dominion of sin

tin that they fear, the Promise is, *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have Dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law but under Grace*: that is, under the Covenant of Grace: And if it be fear of the Prevailing of Sathans Tentations that troubles them, the Promise is, *The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly*: May we not then take heart to be faithful in this Covenant? Yea he hath also condescended to come under this engagement too, even to make us forthcoming in the Covenant; *I will call* (saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 57. 1*) *Upon the Lord who performeth all thing for me*: It might have been said to David, how wilt thou get all done that thou hast undertaken? He answers, *I will call upon him who performeth all things for me*; And so I will get them all done and Performed, so as I may hope to be accepted on the Mediators account and for his sake. *Fifthly*, Consider the Mediator of the Covenant, who is surety and Cautioner not only for believers debt, But also for their duty; Therefore he is called, *Heb. 7. The surety of this better Covenant*; and when Christ and we are engaged in one bond, there is ground for us to expect that something will be got done, tho the principal debtor be not much worth, yet the Cautioner is Worthy and infinitely responsible. *Sixthly*, Consider, that there are already many, who have passed thorow the troublesome Sea of this world and have been Marvellously helped; and it's but a litle, and all you honest engagers to the Lord will be thorow the same Sea, and fairly set on Land; your warfare ere long will be at an end, the prize will be got without any more fighting: what is your fighting, fighting and walking heavily, clothed, as it were, in mourning for a litle time? It's but for a few years, and it may be to some of you not so long; and within a litle space, *The day*



day of refreshing from the presence of the Lord will come ; a relieving of you from your post, a loosing of you from your bonds , a final discharge from your warfare will come ; and a new song will be put in your mouths , and *Palme*s in your hands : O but faithfull dealing with God in the Covenant will have a heartsome ougate ! when ye shall come ashore, all tears shall be wiped from your eyes and sorrow and sighing shall flee away : and ye shall meet with that word, O warm word ! Come ye faithfull Servants, enter into the joy of your Lord : ye will not always fight and wrestle , neither will ye be alwayes tempted and troubled ; rest and repose is a coming it's even at hand : then one ray of his Countenance will be infinitely more heartsome , refreshing and satisfieing, then all these things that ye are now called to abandon and part with, can possibly amount to : Christs first welcome to his Fathers house will eternally banish the remembrance of all the sad things that ye meet with in this world

The Fourth and last Observation is, that The great mean of securing a Covenant & making him stedfast, is, Faith exercised on God, or adhering to him by Faith, by vertue of this Covenant : It is not, to lay weight on or trust to our own strength : but seeing God hath made a promise of thorow-bearing, to undertake the duties that we are called to in his strength, trusting to his Faithfulness , and to his furnishing of us, according to the Covenant : As , when poor sinners are Summoned to appear before God, and they have no righteousness of their own, they are to step forward trusting to Christs righteousness : So when they are called to dutie, and they have no strength of their own to enable them to a suitable discharge thereof , they are to consider that God is faithfull ; who hath promised and who will also do it : and indeed

indeed Believers have found in their comfortable experience, that when they have adventured on dutie with a believing look to Gods Covenanted strength, they have found it go sweetly & surprisngly well with them: Thus it is said of those worthies mentioned, *Heb. 11. That through faith, they wrought Righteousness*, as well as they did all other things thereby: This also is it, which the Lord inculcateth, *John 15. abide in me* (saith He) *and ye shall bring forth much fruit: as the branch cannot bear fruit of it self, except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me, for without me ye can do nothing*: Where it is clear, that it's not enough, that we be in Christ, but that we must abide in him, and have continuall dependance on him for the influences of life and strength derived from him.

Ye then that would be faithfull in Gods Covenant, & would have it *Perpetuall never to be forgotten*, must especially make use of this mean: make Conscience of all other appointed means; *Watch and pray that ye enter not into Tentation*; but see that ye neglect not this mean; which if ye do, *the Watchman will watch in vain*: and your grip or hold will be unsiker, if ye make not use of him to make it sure, and to keep it so. And therefore,

1. Mind seriously and constantly what ye are, in and of your selves; even fickle, fectless, weak, feeble and unconstant creatures, not daring to undertake any thing in your own strength.
2. Remember what God is; and that ye have a worthy, able and responsall Cautioner.
3. Remember that ye are engaged in a *Covenant never so be forgotten*: forgetting is the first rise of unfaithfulness.
4. Remember the Promises that God hath made for your thorow-bearing, and let faith be exercised on them; Joyn with diligence and watchfulness a suitable exercise of Faith.
5. Take a serious look, every day when



when ye go to pray, of your resolutions and engagements, renew them frequently and seriously in his own strength; and be casting the other knot; and put the heart distinctly to say, this was my bargain, and I will through Grace abide by it; and then go and pray over it, that ye may be made faithful in your thus Covenanting with God, that ye may be enabled to pay your vowes and make your honest resolutions Practicable; levelling at this as your Scope and designe in all duties: I have said such a thing and have not kept my word, Lord forgive it for Christs sake: I am engaged in this and that and the other duty, Lord help me to perform. And for your furtherance in humiliation and soft walking before God, look on all your sins as aggravated by this unfaithful and treacherous dealing in Gods Covenant: and on all duties, as those which your Covenant with God binds you to depend on him for strength to be Communicated to you according to the Covenant, for going about them suitably and acceptably: and within a little while ye shall get a fair pass to be gone, and a full discharge of all that ye were trusted with according to the Covenant. And the Lord help you to be faithful, so that it may be betwixt God and you in very deed, *A perpetuall Covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

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A Sermon

# A S E R M O N

Preached Immediately before the *Communion*,

On *Matth. 26. Vers. 28. 29.*

*For this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the Remission of sins. But I drink unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the Vine, untill that day, when I drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdom.*

**A**Lthough we had no more to do at our meeting together in this place to day, but to Read and hear these same wonderful words, If our hearts were in suitable spiritual frame, knowing and considering, what we are about and doing, we would be in a Divine Rapture and Transport of Admiration at His love, and kindled into a flame of Holy zeal for his glory, by these words. O What sweet and happy words are these from our dying Lord Jesus Christ his mouth! Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, Neither hath it entered into the heart of Man to conceive, what things the Lord hath prepared for them that wait for him. And indeed there is a sum of them in these words, they being a Compend of the Testament and legacy which our Lord hath left to his friends: O Sinners, be of good cheer, there are good news and glad tidings of great joy here; Here is the new Covenant and all that is in it, and Remission of sins in Particular, as the Legacy: Here is Christ, who maketh this Covenant Savoury: and it is confirmed



his Death, who is the *Testator* thereof, Which makes it sure: Here is Heaven and Eternall glory, and what would you have more? This is (saith he) *my Blood of the New Testament Which is shed for the Remission of the sins of many*: Which holds forth the Promises, and the convey of them: the Legacy and how it comes to us: *I will not* (saith he) *Drink of this fruit of the Vine, untill I drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdome*: There is Heaven, the heartdome up shot of all: Remission of sins comes to sinners Covenant wise, thorow Christs Blood: and by closing with Christ, and making Application of this Blood, sinners come to get Remission of sins and all the benefits of the Covenant: and are brought at last to Drink the new wine of Heaven, and to Drink it new with Christ, even to share in his Glory, to have one feast and Glory with him: And truly if there were no more to be said, we may most confidently say, that these are wonderful glad tidings, which our blessed Lord Jesus hath left to be the great subject of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and the Scope of the Sacraments.

We shall 1. Open up the words a litle. 2. We shall draw some Doctrines from them. And then, 3. Insist in the Application.

First, Then for *Explication*. From the 26. vers. is set down the Institution of the Supper of the Lord: wherein we have. *First*, What Christ did. *Secondly*, What he Commands the Disciples, and us in them to do. *Thirdly*, He Explicats in these words,

words, what he hath been doing, and Commanded to be done: *This is my Blood* (saith he) *of the New Testament, &c.* As if he had said, would you know what it is that I am doing: There was a Covenant made long since betwixt my Father and me, concerning the elect; wherein I condescended and transacted to take on mans nature, and in that nature to suffer and satisfie Divine justice for their sin. & this is the Commemoration of my Satisfaction according to that Covenant, and the exhibiting and giving to you a confirmation of your interest in the blessings of that Covenant, whereof Remission of sins is one, and a main one: He needed, as would seem, to have said no more, but that he was going to suffer and to suffer for this cause, Even to purchase Redemption to sinners: but he will further shew his Disciples and in them all Believers in him. That this came not to pals bygues, but according to an old Covenant and Eternall transaction the past betwixt *Jehovah* and Him: and so adds the Sacrament to be a Commemoration and a more firm Confirmation thereof to Believers, of all that purchased by it and Promised in it. In the 29. verse He hath two words further, one of warning, another of encouragement: 1. One of warning, *I say unto you, henceforth I will not drink of the Fruit of the Vine*: As if he had said, take heed what ye are doing, make this Communion very welcome, and let it confirm and strengthen you against the tryals that are coming: for I will have no more Communion with you after this manner in this World. 2.



word of encouragement and consolation : because they might think and say, Alace ! Lord, what will become of us, if we shall have no more Communions with thee ? Be not (saith he to them on the matter) discouraged, We shall yet have more and more intimate Communion then ever we had here on earth : There is a day coming, when we shall have a sweet Communion in the Kingdom of Heaven together, when we shall drink it new, when we shall have the thing signified, Even Communion without the intervention of Ordinances, in the full Harvest of joy in God, in his Kingdom. Then, vers. 30. As if he were going to a Triumph, He and they sing a *Hymn* or Psalm : Partly thereby to teach us to be chearfull : and partly to shew that singing of Psalmes is not unsuitable for this action.

To make the former words and what we are to say on them a little more clear : We would in this Sacrament, which here the Lord Explicats, Consider *Three* or *Four* things. *First*, Christs Offer : Wherein there are *Two* things, viz. The outward and visible signes, the Elements : and the inward invisible thing signified by them, Which is Christs Body & Blood : In the Offer then in short, We have not only the Element, or signe, but the thing signified and represented by it : Even as in the word of the Gospel, there are these *Two*, viz. : So many words made up of Letters and Syllables, and the matter Contained in them. *Secondly*, Consider the receiving of Christs offer, wherein there are *Two* things, 1. The act of receiving the Element by the

hand. 2. The hearts receiving what is offered in and by the Elements : Even as in hearing the word, There is the giving or lending of the ear to the voice of words , that they may be understandingly heard, and there is the receiving what is spoken, by Faith in the heart : As Christ holds forth both in his offer, so the Believer would both wayes receive, by the hand the Element should be received , and by Faith the thing signified should be received. *Thirdly*, Ye would consider this Application of the thing signified in *a twofold* respect, 1. As it holds out the entering of us into the Covenant in order to the receiving of the Pardon of sin, when the Sacrament is Considered complexly with the word. 2. As it Applyeth Christ and the benefits that come by him for our consolation : Christ is to be received in the former respect, before he can be received in the Letter : we must needs receive Christ in his offer, ere we can receive any benefit that comes by him : Therefore the word goes along with the Sacrament, that we may get a gripe and catch hold of Christ by the Covenant : for they that are without the Covenant are without Christ and all saving benefit by him : But where Christ is received, and Faith closeth with him as he is offered , The Soul may warrantably make Application of him , Not only for Pardon of sin, The Particular benefit here expressly mentioned, but for all the other benefits of the Covenant : Whereas they who have not faith , have nothing, and receive nothing : but are deeply guilty thorow their not receiving, but rather rejecting and despising



despising of Christ and his benefits. *Fourthly*, Ye would consider this Sacrament, as it seals directly our warrant to receive Christ and his benefits, or as it seals our Application of Christ and his benefits, for it may be usefull for both, and is actually so to believers: In the *First* respect we offer to you a good security for your Salvation, on condition of your receiving Christ; But in the *Second* Respect the security is sealed simply, as having Gods seal appended to it, to all who have received him. Thus the tree of life was a seal of the Covenant of life by works to *Adam*, if he stood, but it was not a confirmation that he should have life by the Covenant, except he fulfilled that which was called for in it: So Circumcision was a Seal of the righteousness of Faith to *Ishmael* and other visible Church Members, as well as to *Isaac*, in the *First* Sense, that is, that the security was good; But to *Isaac* and Believers, It was not only a Seal or a Confirmation that the security was good; and sufficient in it self; but a Seal of Confirmation, that it should be good to them: Therefore in coming to partake of the Sacrament, We would premit alway our closing with Christ; And then we have not only Gods word and Oath, but also the Sacrament for his Seal of Confirmation of the Covenant. In a word, Christ doth offer here to all a Pledge that he will make good the Covenant; And it's the great guilt of many Professors of the Gospel, that they close not with him in his offer, so as to make use of it: Which makes them guilty of the body and Blood of the Lord: which they neither would nor could be guilty of, if this were not in their offer: but it's more to Believers, who have by Faith closed with Christ; this Seal of the Covenant accreweth to their security, who have taken Gods word and rested on it; The Believer then, is not only sure in

this respect that he hath a good warrant to trust and lean  
to, that is, a Sealed Covenant; but also that it will not  
fail him in Particular, So that he may say, *I know in  
whom I have believed*: And we would not divide these  
things that God hath so wisely and well conjoined, viz  
Closing with Christ and the Covenant in the right way  
according to the terms thereof; and taking this Seal  
of confirmation of it.

**Now in the Second Place I come to give you a little  
view and short series of the Gospel in several Observati  
ons from the words; that we may hast to that which  
we more particularly aim at, To wit, the Use of all.**

*First Then, Observe, That all men and women, even  
the Elect not excepted, are sinfull, and as such, Consider  
ed before God; So it's said, Isaiah 53. 6. All we like  
sheep have gone astray; This is the Object of the Gos  
pel, sinners; the Persons for whose behove Christ hath  
made his Testament, and to whom he hath left his le  
gacies, are sinners: even sinfull men and women, and  
the more sin be in them, the more Grace shines in God  
crooning of such, and in Christs dying for such, and not  
choosing nor dying for fallen Angels: It's sinners (I  
say) who are the Object of Christs Testament.*

*Secondly, Observe, That there is a grand designe laid  
by God from eternity for the saving of many sinners, and  
for Procuring to them Remission of sins, the fruit of the  
ancient Counsell of the Blessed and glorious trinity. And  
this is it, which Christ aims at in all his Ordinances, to  
get sinners pardoned, and freed from the curse due to  
them for sin, Reconciled, Justified, Sanctified, and  
brought to drink the new Wine of Heaven. This is laid  
down by Jehovah, as the Basis and foundation, where-  
on he hath reared up a Magnificent and Glorious Su-  
perstructure*



perstructure of the Riches of his most Sovereignly free Grace, for making it to shine forth conspicuously and radiantly throughout all ages.

*Thirdly, Observe, That there is a Covenant well ordered, suited and fitted to promote this great and Glorious end and designe of saving sinners: A covenant so contrived, as it may well suit the saving of sinners, and procure unto them the Remission of sins: There is a transaction betwixt God and the Mediator, a Surety and Cautioner is Provided to take on the debt of the elect, and to satisfy Justice to the full for all their sins: and this is one Article of the Covenant, that the Mediator should undertake thy debt, O Believer, and Satisfie for it: He was (saith Isaiah, chap. 53.) Wounded for our Transgressions, bruised for our Iniquities: the Chastisement of our peace was on him, and by his stripes we are healed.*

*Fourthly, Observe, That according to this Covenant and transaction, our blessed Lord Jesus hath really, actually and fully satisfied for the sins of Believers, according to his undertaking: So that, as in the Counsell of God, that great trust was put on him, and he undertook the work of sinners Redemption; So, now it is, Father I have finished the work, which thou gavest me to do: The covenant is exactly fulfilled on my part, not one Article of it is unfulfilled: all that was committed to me is now fully performed, Hence it was his last word on the Cross, it is finished.*

*Fifthly Observe, That by the Application of the Blood of Jesus thorow a sinners closing with him and interesting himself in him: He may and doth obtain Remission of sins, and partake of the benefit of Redemption Purchased by his Blood, even of all the benefits of the Covenant: Therefore when he hath said, This is my Blood of the*

*New Testament, which is shed for the Remission of the sins of many: He turns over the words to them, and tells them, that they shall drink the fruit of this Vine new with him in his Fathers Kingdom: As it was made sure, that Adam was to have life on the condition of perfect obedience: so it is as sure to a sinner taking with his sin, and betaking himself to, and closing with Christ and his Satisfaction, that he shall have Pardon of sin, and all the Benefits of this Covenant, even to eternal Glory, secured to him.*

*Sixthly Observe, That as our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ hath Purchased this Redemption and Remission, so he is must willing, desirous, and pressing that sinners, to whom the Gospel is offered, should make use of his righteousness and of the Purchase made thereby, for this end, that they may have Remission of sins and eternal life. For not only is the security good, sufficient and sure in it self, The Testament being confirmed: But he is (to speak so with reverence) Passionately desirous that sinners should endeavour on good ground to be sure of it in themselves: therefore he kindly puts it in a Legacy, makes serious offer of it, and strongly confirms it to all that embrace it.*

*Seventhly, Observe, That It is to Testifie this his willingness that sinners should make use of his purchase, and lay hold on his Righteousness, on Remission of sins and life thorow him, and to promote the acceptation thereof among sinners, that he hath instituted this Ordinance of the Communion. Take ye, Eat ye, &c. For this is (as if he had said) the end of the institution of this Sacrament and the reason of it, even to be a signe and Seal of confirmation to many, of the Remission of sins thorow my Blood: This was my desigme in laying down my life, to get many sinners Pardoned, and this is the end of the institution*



institution of this Precious ordinance of my Supper, to apply it to them, and to confirm them in the Faith of it.

*Eightly, Observe, That They who would partake aright of this Sacrament for their confirmation as to the Pardon of their sins and their sharing in the rest of the benefits of Christs purchase, would first close with Christ in the Covenant, and make that the way of their making use of this Sacrament, to confirm the bargain: Therefore is it called the Cup of the new Covenant in his Blood, this is the sine quo non, even closing with Christ in a Covenant: else the Sacrament can do no good: it's the great thing that admits sinners to have right and access to Christs purchase: the writing must first be Subscribed, and then Sealed; the bargain made and then confirmed.*

*Ninthly, Observe, That they who have the offer of the Gospel, and are admitted to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, would be so present, serious and every way in a posture suitable to that action, as if they were never to have the offer or occasion of another Communion. As the Lord said to Elijah the Prophet, arise, Eat, for thou hast a long Journey to go, So saith the Lord to the Disciples, and in them to us, Hence forth I will drink no more of the fruit of the Vine, till I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of my Father: Ye will get no mo Communion with me here, and therefore go rightly about this, Improve it well, and let a foundation be laid here of a solid standing interest in me, that ye may be ready to meet with the tryals that are coming.*

*Tenthly, Observe, That sinners who receive Jesus Christ on the terms he is offered in the Gospel, and take the Sacrament for a confirmation of their interest in him, and in his Purchase, though they should never have another Communion in this world may confidently expect a joyfull one in heaven: I tell you (saith he) for your consolation,*

consolation, though I drink no more of the fruit of the Vine with you here, yet the time cometh, when ye and I shall drink it new in the Kingdom of my Father.

Eleventhly, Observe, That honest Communicants sensible of sin, and content to take Christ on his own terms, are called to be cheerfull, and to cheer themselves in the lively hope and expectation of Heaven: And a Believer, though a sinner, that takes this way, should take his communion as a Seal and Pledge, confirming him in the Faith and hope of his being ere long to have an eternal and uninterrupted Communion with Christ in Glory.

In these Observations Ye have a short hint of the Treasure that Believers have in Christ: and from them ye may gather, what a full Christ, a full Covenant, and good bargain ye have, who have really closed with him: ye have a most liberal and Richly bountifull Mediator, who hath put all these great things and many more into his Testament to sinners, offered to them in the Gospel and Sealed in the Sacrament of his supper, to all them that take him and rest Satisfied with him: for which satisfaction there is all the reason in the world.

And therefore to come, in particular Application, to the Use of all: There is here good and large ground to speak a little to these Three 1. To Bring forth to you the good news of Salvation through Christ. 2. To Exhort and press you to embrace and accept of them with gladness of heart, to make welcome this Faithful saying worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners. 3. To Comfort and solace sinners, that have betaken themselves to Christ, in the abundant consolation of this Covenant, and in the administration of it, and in the Mediator the great subject and Substance of it: and seeing it may well be said here, who is sufficient



*Sufficient for these things?* ye would have an eye to him, who can make this Gospel to savour sweetly, and even triumph: The Commission to preach it is his; the Ordinance and Institution is his; and if there be any appetite for your food amongst you, any sense of sin and desire of Communion with Blessed Jesus here, and of Communion with him in Heaven hereafter, Look, O look up to him and beseech him to Breathe on his own Ordinance, and to back this word with life and power.

The *First Use* Then, serves to bring forth to you this day the good news of Salvation through Jesus Christ. O sinners, by this Gospel and Testament of Christ, and by the Administration of this Ordinance, we have good news to tell you; *This is the New Testament in his Blood which is shed for the Remission of the sins of many.* I shall endeavour to hold forth to you the goodness and gladness of these news and tidings in these *Three*: and would to God we had sensible sinners to Believe, receive and welcome them. 1. That there is a good bargain thorow Christ to be gotten by sinners. 2. That sinners, by accepting of Christ, have sufficient warrant and good security for applying to themselves and making use of this good bargain. 3. That Christ is most willing and desirous that sinners should close with this bargain, and make use of him and of his Righteousness for attaining the Pardon of sin, and for making themselves happy everlastingly.

For the *First*; Sinners, here is a good bargain to you thorow Christ, glad tidings of great Happiness, fear not (saith the Angel to the Shepherds, *Luke 2. 10. 11.*) Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all People; for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord; Yea we have these good news to preach to day, Behold to us  
hath

hath died a Saviour, and he hath made his Testament, and hath left a most ample, Rich, comfortable and Blessed Legacy; and is not this a good & full bargain? Which will be clear if ye consider, *First*, The real worth of it: is there any thing a sinner can stand in need of, but it's here, or any ill that a sinner can be under, but there is here a remedie for it? Is it the sense of sin, fear of Justice, felt Wrath, the Apprehension of Hell? Here are glad tidings, *Remission of sins by the Blood of Christ*, This is the one Express Article of the Testament here; We tell you, sinners there is a Saviour whose life hath gone for sin, and there is a free absolution to be had by verue of his Blood, to all who will lay hold on it. *Secondly*, Ye have the Covenant to make it sure, and *Remission of sins* is Particularly mentioned in it for your satisfaction; Nay look what ever further is in the Covenant, and ye have it also upon your closing with Christ, according to his Divine power he hath (saith the Apostle, 2 Pet. 1. 3.) given unto us all things that pertain to life and Godliness, and vers. 4. Exceeding great and Precious Promises are given us, Promises of Justification and Sanctification; what a bundle of Promises have we, Ezek. 36. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and wash you from all your uncleanness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you, and will cause you to walk in my statutes and do them, &c.* There are Promises of subduing of the Body of death, of circumcising the heart, of causing to love God, of putting his fear in the heart, of healing back slidings: These and many mo are Articles of this Testament, which as they are very comforting, so are they very frequent and abundant in the Covenant; This word of God is, as it were, the Index and Catalogue of them; and in effect, there is not a Promise in the word of God, but it is here. *Thirdly*,  
There



There is yet something more; and that is, the Promiser himself is left in Legacy, Which no other Testator doth; *This is my Body* (saith he) *That was broken for you: Open your mouth wide and I will fill it: I will be thy God:* That is, the comprehensive Article of the Covenant, and the great Gift, the Gift of gifts: and we may very safely say, that, as he could not swear by a greater than himself, So he could not give a greater gift than himself: would God there were suitable conceptions and apprehensions of this non-such Gift; and that he in whom the fulness of the God head dwells bodily, were looked upon as being thus in our offer, and were Cordially closed with by Faith; that's a great word, which we have, Revel. 20. 7. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things:* and how is it performed and fulfilled? *I will be his God;* this is all, and without this there is nothing. Fourthly, Having this Gift, is there any thing that can be added? the Text says, Heaven: not that Heaven is more than Christ, but this is it, that Christ enjoyed in Heaven is more, than Christ enjoyed here on earth; *I will drink it new with you* (saith he) *in my Fathers Kingdom:* The flood-gates are there (as it were) opened; and the heart enlarged and made capacious to let in the fulness of God to the filling of the Glorified Believer, even to the very brim; Therefore is Communion with Christ said to be *Now* in Heaven: We may have Christ here, and Believers have him; but this is an addition, when we have our husband not only in right, but have access Immediately and most intimately to converse with him, and he to converse with us: When the Queen shall be brought unto the King in Raiment of needle work, and taken into the Kings Palace with gladness and with joy, and the Virgins her Companions with her: When there shall be a putting of unbelief

to shame and an Eternal Banishment of it, and a Compleating of Believers Satisfaction : the eye of the most profoundly exercised and experienced Believers never saw, their ear never heard, neither were they ever able to conceive the thousand part of these abundant consolations and heart-ravishing joys, that shall flow from the Presence of the Lamb and of him that sitteth on the Throne, When there shall be no interveening Ordinances, nor Temple in that higher House, but the Lamb shall be the light thereof : and yet all this is offered to sinners, and put in Christs Testament to them, to the end it may be made sure. And *Lastly*, As all these other things do Concurr to make out the excellency of the Bargain ; So doth this in a special manner ; that the price is payed, that they have nothing to lay down, but may come and take all freely without money and without price. .

*Secondly*, For furthering and strengthening the consolation, ye would consider, that the Believer who receives Christ as he is offered in the Gospel, though he be a sinner, yet he hath a most sufficient, excellent and unquestionable security for, and right unto all these good things, that our dying Lord Jesus hath comprehended in his Testament : Believing sinners, what security would ye have ? ye have Christs word, *I say unto you, &c.* Ye have Christs Covenant and Testament ; *This is the Cup of the New Testament in my Blood* ; and now the Testament is Confirmed and Sealed, so that neither man nor Angel can annull nor alter it ; Our Lords Testament being Sealed it stands legally registred in the Court Books of Heaven ; and it stands legal on these terms, that a sinner who takes with his sin, disclaims his own righteousness ; and betakes himself to Christs Righteous-



Righteousness, putting it in the room of his own, for his Justification before God; may be sure of Christs legacy and of Heaven: as it's sure, that Christ suffered, and Instituted this Sacrament for his Confirmation in the Faith of it; the accepting of Christ, the submitting to his righteousness, the yeelding to the Covenant, and closing with him on his own terms, gives him a right to Heaven and all the Riches contained in his Testament. To make out this, as being the very thing of the Comfortable Application of all that hath been said, and of what we are further to say; I shall offer these four grounds; The *First* whereof is, some clear Scriptures, that hold forth so much, viz. That as really they shall have life who take Christ and his offer, and close with him; as he really suffered and Satisfied the Justice of God for their sins. The *First* of these Scriptures is *Heb. 7. 25.* *Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him; He is an able Saviour, able to the uttermost, and there is not a point of Latitude, longitude or altitude beyond the uttermost; He is able to save them all, and what all? All that will come and make use of him, and give him the credit of his Offices; all that will come unto God by him.* A *Second* is, *Rom. 5. 20.* Where the *Apostle* out-reasons sin, for holding forth the triumph of free-Grace; *Where sin abounded (saith he) Grace did much more abound; That as sin hath reigned unto death, Even so (and indeed it is an excellent So) might Grace Reigne through Righteousness unto Eternal Life by Jesus Christ our Lord:* though we would endeavour to our utmost to unfold these words, we could not unfold all that is infolded in them; did sin make sinners lyable to death, and Triumph over them? So Grace hath erected a Throne, by Christs Righteousness, not by inherent Holiness, and hath

Triumphed

Triumphed over sin: the way how Grace gives out its orders and obtains its end, Is not by our Righteousness, but by the Righteousness of Christ, through Faith in him; Justice (to speak with reverence) is off the Throne, and Grace orders and sways all, in making Application of Christs Purchased Righteousness to believers. The Third Scripture is *Acts 13. 38.* *Be it known unto you, therefore, Men and Brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and vers. 26. To you is the word of this Salvation sent; O glad tidings to the greatest sinners! Thorow the man Christ is Preached to you Remission of sins, and by him all that Believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be Justified by the Law of Moses.* What are ye owing? Or what can the Law, Justice or Satan claime? ye are Justified from all these things: and when he speaks thus to despisers with a *Be it known unto you*, That the offer is made to them, we may on good ground turn it over to you, and say, *Be it known unto you, that thorow Christ Jesus, ye may have Remission of sins; and be Justified from all things from which ye could not be Justified by the Law of Moses, According to the terms of the Covenant: Let your libell be as long as it will; Grace is on the Throne and will receive you.* Secondly, Consider, that the great designe which the Lord drives in the business of Redemption and publishing of it in the Gospel, Is, that Remission of sins and Life may be made sure to lost Sinners that came to Christ: Why I pray, was the Covenant made? was it not for this end? As it is, *Heb. 8. This is my Covenant (saith the Lord) that I will make with the house of Israel, I will be Merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and Iniquities will I remember no more; no more, O sweet sound! What is the designe of the*  
Mediator



Mediator in his Sufferings ? Is it not this ? So **John 10.**  
**10.** *I am come, that they might have Life and have it*  
*more abundantly, and John 17. For their sakes I Sancti-*  
*fie my self, that they also may be Sanctified ;* and here,  
the new Covenant in his Blood is for the Remission of the  
sins of many : and this being the mean for attaining the  
end. It is Impossible, that it can misgive or fail. **Thirdly,**  
Consider the Contrivance of the Covenant, and ye will  
see, that it is impossible it can fail ; Heaven and Earth  
shall sooner fail, then one Title of this sworn and con-  
firmed Covenant : It cannot fail on the Mediators side,  
for he hath Payed the price already ; Neither can it fail  
on **Jehovahs** side, He will not fail to make Application  
of Grace to sinners, nor be unfaithful to the Faithfull  
Mediator ; And since upon the one side, Justice had ac-  
cess to exact of Christ the full price, even to the least  
farthing, by vertue of the Covenant of Redemption,  
when he became surety ; will not the same Covenant,  
on the other side, make it out, that Grace shall have as  
good access to Pardon the sinner, for whom he under-  
took ? For he (saith the Apostle, **2 Cor. 5.**) was  
made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made  
the Righteousness of God in him ; If the Covenant  
(which is one) hath had the designed effect in and on  
the Mediator, as to his fulfilling all that was undertaken  
by him therein ; shall not the Promises made to him,  
as namely these, **Isaiah 53. 10. 11.** *He shall see his seed,*  
*the Pleasure of the Lord shall Prosper in his hand ; by*  
*his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many,*  
take effect and be fulfilled ? Doubtless they will most  
certainly and infustrably. **Fourthly,** Consider the great  
experience which the Saints have had of the truth of  
this in all ages ; are there any this day before the Throne,  
Blessing the Lamb and him that sits thereon, or any  
that

that are on their way thither ward ; But they are so many witnesses of this Truth , that closing with Christ hath good Security for Remission of sins, and for Eternal life ? There shall never be one who shall have it to say , I trusted to this security , and it failed me : and hereupon riseth the sweet Song, *Worthy is the Lamb to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing, Revel. 5. 12.* Nay even those in the Pit shall bear witness to this truth ; for ( saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 2. 15. ) *We are unto God a sweet Saviour in them that are saved and in them that Perish ; to the one we are the Saviour of Death unto death : and to the other, the Saviour of Life unto life ;* And in the preceeding words he saith, *Thanks be to God which alwayes causeth us to triumph in Christ ;* He maketh the Triumph of the Faithfull Ministers of the Gospel, some way, to be in them that are damned, by his taking Vengeance on them, for despising His Grace offered : and they are made to see, that it was a sure bargain to them that through Grace embraced it. And if this be so Good a bargain to them that embrace it, and so very sike and sure , What, I pray, are we seeking ? But that this good bargain and the sufficient security thereof may be taken hold on , as it is proposed : alter not the terms of it ; and indeed it would be very unreasonable to presume to do so, or so much as to desire an alteration of them : for though we had them at our own contriving, We could never, by very far, contrive them so well : Nay let me say, if Angels were Preaching to you , they would think it a Priviledge to have access to mention His precious Name. Now seeing it is the Great designe of the Gospel to have sinners closing with Christ on his own Terms : O do not frustrate the Grace of God : And seeing Grace makes offer of Life and



Life and of Remission of sins to sinners, to save them freely : let Grace get such sinners to save as it's seeking, and it shall be a bargain.

*Thirdly*, To prosecute this yet a little further : ye would consider, that, as there is a good bargain to be had thorow Christ and by Faith in him, and as there is good security for it : so it is our Lords delight and good Pleasure, and he is very desirous that sinners should make Application of it by Faith, receive and rest on him and his righteousness, for making themselves eternally Happy : We are not speaking of such a Happiness and security, that the Lord will be angry at you if ye take hold of it : but of a happiness and security, that he is seriously willing ye should receive : And he doth most earnestly beseech you to take hold of this Covenant on these Sweet and easy terms, that ye be Heartily content and well Pleased with it. O sensible sinners, do ye indeed believe this, when we Preach to you, that our Lord Jesus is as desirous to have you saved, as ye are; and that his righteousness be closed with, as ye are to have it ? Nay more : that there was never a Soul more hungry and greedy ( when with a heart chock-full of desires after it ) to Communicat, then he is seriously willing to admit such a Soul to Communion with him ? Then, as ye would do him a Pleasure ( and it's all that ye can do ) keep not a distance but step to, and take what he Offers ; not only the Sacrament, but himself in it, for your head, Husband and Lord : and that ye may not Scare-stand, nor halt, to do so : Consider, that there is not only a warrant to come, but that he calleth you to come, and is ready heartily to welcome you ; come on his call ; and his call is no less broad, then the call of the Gospel ; there is a warrant given you, on your hearing of the Gospel, and quitting of your own righteousness,

righteousness, to receive Christ and his Righteousness,  
 and to admit of him to the exercise of his offices about  
 you according to the Covenant: And indeed we know  
 not a truth of the Gospel that hath mo confirmations  
 then this hath, viz. That Christ the Mediator is very  
 willing and desirous, that sinners close with him, and  
 get the good of his Purchase. For the making out of  
 which, take these following Considerations. *First*,  
 what is the great designe of the Covenant, but this? As  
 we have it. *Isaiah 61 1, 2, 3. The Spirit of the Lord  
 God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to Preach  
 good tidings to the meek, He hath sent me to bind up  
 the broken hearted, so Proclaim liberty to the Captives,  
 to give to them that mourn beauty for Ashes, the Oyl of  
 joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the  
 Spirit of Heaviness; and this is called the Proclaiming  
 of the acceptable year of the Lord: Wherein all the three  
 Persons of the Blessed Trinity concurr, as is clear, vers.  
 1. Consider, Secondly, All his Offices, and ye will find  
 that they Preach and Proclaim the same thing; his  
 Name is Jesus because He saves his People from their  
 sins: He is King, Priest and Prophet for this end: and  
 what saith his Preaching and Corrospendent Prayer,  
*John 17. Father I will, that they whom thou hast given  
 me, be with me, but that he would fain have them there?*  
 And what shall I say? Is there any proof of it, that can  
 be given beyond His Death? *I lay down my life* (saith  
 he) *for my sheep*; The Salvation of lost Elect sinners  
 went very near his heart; Therefore, when none in  
 Heaven nor on earth can help, then saith he, *Lo I come  
 to do thy will, O my God. Thirdly, Consider, with  
 what Pleasure and delight he went about the work of  
 Redemption; As is very clear in that 40th. Psalm,*  
*where he heartsomly saith, Lo I come, I delight to do*  
*thy**



thy will : I even hasten to undertake it ; And when he is come , he saith , John 4. 34. *It is my meat , to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work :* and what work was that ? Even to lay down his Life , to gather the lost sheep of the house of *Israel* ; to take away the feud that was betwixt God and them , and to Reconcile them to him : and when it cometh to the very push of actuall laying down his life ; He will not open his mouth to divert it : though he might have commanded more then twelve Legions of Angels , yet he would not do it : for this cause ( saith he ) *Came I into this World.*

*Fourthely*, Consider the end of all the Ordinances ; wherefore are they instituted ? what saith the word , but that *Thorow this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins* ? What say Ministers , but that *We are Ambassadors in Christ*, stead , beseeching you to be Reconciled unto God ? Which evidenceth Plainly , that Christ would saie ( to speak so ) have peace made betwixt God and sinners , and them saved : and what saith the Sacrament , but even the words of the Text ? *This is the new Covenant in my Blood shed for the Remission of the sins of many :* And can we think on the end of these Ordinances , but we must also think on Christs willingness , that sinners should make Application of him and of his Purchase ?

*Fifthly*, Consider further , How he esteems of a sinners coming to him , *There is* ( saith he ) *Joy in Heaven at the Conversion of a sinner* : We may say , that it is the gladness of his heart , when any sinner cometh home to him : Therefore it is said , that *the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand , and he shall see of the travel of his soul and be Satisfied*, *Isaiah 53. 10, 11.* It is Satisfaction to him for all the Travel of his Soul , to see sinners coming in and getting good of him : and in the Song , He is said to feed in the Gardens and to be gathering lilies ;

*lilies*; Yea, that the day of Souls being *espoused to him*,  
*is the day of the gladness of his heart*. *Sixthly*, Consider  
 how weightied (to speak so with reverence to him)  
 our Lord is, when sinners will not make use of him,  
 it's accounted by him, as it were; an affronting of him,  
 Even a treading of the Blood of the Covenant under foot,  
 and an accounting of it to be an unholy thing, a sort and  
 degree of doing despite to the Spirit of Grace: He who  
 could look sometimes on the wrath of God and not  
 shed a tear; yet, when he came to *Jerusalem*, weeped  
 over it: And upon the other hand, O! what compla-  
 cency hath he in a sinners coming home to him, which  
 makes him sweetly smile and rejoice. *Seventhly*, Con-  
 sider his exceeding great forbearance toward sinners,  
 while they are straying, and his exceeding heartie wel-  
 coming of them, when they return. Let an inquest (to  
 say so) be led on his Procedure with all the hearers of  
 the Gospel, that are here on earth, and with all that are  
 in Heaven and hell, and all of them will be constrained  
 to subscribe to the truth of this, that he is full of long-  
 suffering: Doth he not spare even the vessels of wrath  
 fitted to destruction? And doth He not, only spare his  
 own, but Pity them as a Father pitieth his Children?  
 And that wonderfull welcom of the Father to his Pro-  
 digal Son is nothing to Christs welcoming of a repent-  
 ing sinner, being but a dark Resemblance of it; He  
 casts not up to him his bygone faults, Neither sayes,  
 what is this you have done, miserable wretch? No such  
 word; but *This is my Son that was dead, and is alive,*  
*that was lost and now is found*: Believe it, O Believe it  
 (which is the very scope of the Parable) Our Lord  
 Jesus is as glad in a Holy way at a sinners coming home.  
*Eightly*, Consider, how easie our Lord is to be pleased  
 with any honest mint or essay that is made of returning



to him ; He is so very willing , that a sinner make Application of his Righteousness, that where there is reality, he will ( as it were ) take half a Faith for Faith, were it even, but like a *Smoking flax* or *bruised Reed*, or a *grain of mustard seed* ; He will take a sincere resolution to confess, for the confession of sin ; which is clear, *Psalms 32. I said ( saith David ) I will confess my Transgression, and thou forgavest the Iniquity of my sin :* If he had proposed the offer of life on such terms, as would have wearied us all our dayes, we ought to have Judged him willing that we should partake of it, for it cost him very dear ; But when it is not *Abrahams* Faith only, but any Faith how weak so ever, it sound, that he graciously accepts ; How doth it set forth his great willingness ? *Him that cometh to me ( saith he ) I will in no wise cast out ;* The word is doubled in the Original *I will not, Not,* to shew the holy passionateness of our Lords desire, and his exceeding great willingness to have sinners closing with him ; So *Isaiah 45. Salvation is promised even to a Look, look unto me all the ends of the Earth and be Saved ;* and if sinners cannot well look, think but honestly and let their heart yeeld and it shall be a bargain ; *He that is athirst let him come, Revel. 22. And if there be scarce the pain of Hunger or Thirst, The Spirit and the Bride say come, and whosoever will, let him come and take of the Water of Life freely ;* And this willingness is nothing else, but the thought and desire of an heart consenting to accept of his offer : Or if this be not little enough, there is less yet, *Psalms 37. 7. Rest in the Lord,* the word ( as it is on the Margent and *Psal. 62. 1. ) is, be silent to the Lord ;* If the heart cannot so well and distinctly say *Amen* to the bargain, Let it ( as it were ) hold its tongue or hold its peace ; let it be silent, say nothing against

against it, or give a silent quiet answer, or by way of Approbation, and Acceptation, keep silence; and shall be accepted: O wonderfull stooping! Doth not this declare and manifestly Preach the exceeding great willingness, that our sweet Lord Jesus hath to Communicat and apply his purchase to sinners? *Ninthly* Consider the Persons on whom he confers the offer, and the manner how he Prosecuts it; and it may yet further hold forth, how seriously willing he is that sinners should welcome it, and be made up by it; who pray, are called, *Luke 14 21*? It's *the Poor, the Blind, the Maimed, the Halt, the Lame, &c.* And are there any that can say, they are worse? If thou say, I can do nothing, I am Maimed and cannot come: The Gospel bids call the Cripple, and provides *Him a Chariot of wood of Lebanon, Paved with love*, and having (I speak so) all the Seats and cushions of it of love, *Can 3. 10.* And giveth stilts or crutches of Grace to underprop; and Eagles wings to carry them: If thou be a confused body, and wotst not what to do, it bids, call the *Blind*; If thou be *Poor, Blind, Miserable, Wretched and Naked*: and yet having conceited and farced that thou wast *Rich*, Thou art not excluded for all that for, *Revel. 3. 18.* *Laodicea* consists of a Hypocritical Pack, and company of Luke-warm Professours, who are so loathsome to Christ, that He threatens to spit them out of his mouth: And yet to such, even to such he saith, *I counsell thee to buy of me, &c.* And if they be invited, who can exempt or exclude themselves from the offer or bargain? Do not these things move Convincingly and Irrefragably demonstrat his willingness? When there is not a sinner that is either *Poor, proud, vain, Hypocritical, &c.* But he is included in the call of the Gospel? *Tenthly, Consider his urgency*



and pressingn is in making and bearing home the offer : O how long-suffering is He! And with what Patience doth he wait on? It's not an Ambassage, that's broken up, if it be not presently closed with, as a hastie-man doth: but *All the day, have I stretch-  
e out my hands to a gain-saying people, Isaiab 65.* Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gather-  
ed thee, &c. *Matth. 23.* How doth wisdom stand and press her invitation, *Prov. 1. 20. and 8. 1, 2, &c. Ezek. 18. 31. 32. Turn you at my Rebuke, why will ye die? Luke 14. 23. Go to the high-ways and  
compell them to come in. 1 John 3. 23. This is his Com-  
mandment, that ye believe on the Name of the Son of God:* It's not left as an indifferent thing at sinners option, to do or not do, but the same Authority, that enjoines keeping the Sabbath and that forbids Cursing and Swearing, doth lay on this Command of Believing, *Come to the Wedding, Be-  
lieve, man and woman, and be saved:* and what is all this to the bowels of Mercy, Grace, and Love that are in him? *His Belly is like Ivory, overlaid with  
Saphirs:* His face is white and Ruddy, a part where-  
of this is: and yet it's nothing (to speak so) to the principall copie, which is his heart, that's a great depth, even the very Center and Element (as it were) of love, *God is love* (saith *John*) as if he were nothing else but love: and what a love must it be, where he is (to speak so) turned into love in the person of Christ? Angels cannot to the full consider of it nor conceive it: Your hearts cannot reach it: sure there is much, wonderfully much

ground here to lay it for an undoubted truth, that our Lord Jesus is exceedingly desirous of the Salvation of sinners and of many sinners: and is in a great readiness to make his Righteousness forthcoming to them, and heartily to welcome all that come to him.

The *Second use* is of *Exhortation*: and ye may at first blush see, whither it runs, Even to stir us up to accept of and embrace these good news with glad hearts, is there here a good bargain and a sure way through Faith to make use of it? And is Christ so willing to Communicate it? What shall I say to you! Is it not a pity to miss it? Nay would ye do Christ a pleasure? then lay weight on his Righteousness, and give him sinfull Souls to be saved by him: if we sought great or hard things from you to please him, would you not judge your selves oblig'd to grant them? But when he saith on the matter, give me your Souls to be saved, and I shall account that Satisfaction to me for all the travell of my Soul: O How unspeakably great is your Obligation readily and cheerfully to grant so loving and reasonable a request! If such a gracious offer had never been made. It would have been, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* And there would have been a mighty great scaring and trembling to draw neer: but when it is not, to the *Mount that cannot be touched*, not to Moses that we are called to come, but to a Saviour, whom ye cannot please better then, Nay not at all, but by receiving of him, and whom in some respect ye cannot displease at all, if ye receive



Receive him, let me beseech and obtest you, as ye would not be found guilty of treading this blood of the Covenant under foot, and as ye would not forever debar your selves from Remission of sins with him; make use, O make use of this Propitiation for sin and for procuring your Pardon and peace; would to God this were the fruit of such a days work; for indeed it's our great work, and the very Scope of all our Preaching; And behold, I Proclaim to you, that Remission of sins is to be had thorow his Blood, and that there shall not be any upbraiding of you, nor casting up of bygones, if ye will indeed receive him and close with him, on his own sweet, easy and very reasonable terms: O then fit not this urgent Call, and the day of your merciful Visitation.

And to press this *Exhortation* a litle, Consider, that Grace hath a Throne and shall triumph in this Gospel either in your gaining, or in being avenged upon you for your despising of its richest and freest offers: Let us, I Pray, reason the matter with you a litle? And *First*, Are there not sinners here? There is not a design in this Gospel to save any others but sinners; and if so, to you is this *Salvation* set, who by Nature are sinners, enemies, and at feud with God: The Doctrine of this Gospel carries in its bosom Remission of sins: would to God ye were suitably affected with sin, and Judging your selves, that so ye might be in some Capacity to receive it. *Secondly*, Tell me what is it that ye would be at? Is it Remission of sins? It's here: would ye have the

Covenant and Promises? here they are : Is it Christ himself that ye would have, because ye dare not trust to a promise without a Cautioner? Here he is : or would ye have Heaven and be Eternally happy? It's also here. Consider then, I beseech you, what is in your Offer : dare you say, that the security is not valid, good and sufficient? And if ye should, there are many witnesses in Heaven against you, and also the Sacrament on Earth, which now is offered to confirm you : This bargain therefore, and its security must be receiv'dr else w<sup>o</sup> unto you for ever : This word which we now Preach, Nay these stones shall bear witness against you, that our Lord Jesus was willing to save you and every one of you, and ye would not : And therefore your Blood shall be required at your own hand, and He found without any the least Culpable accession to it. *Thirdly,* Ye are either to Communicat to day, or ye are only to be hearers and Spectators : whether the one or the other, Is there not a necessity that ye close this bargain. If ye be to Communicat, will ye take the Bread and wine and misken and slight Christ? If so, ye will eat and drink your own Damnation : would you have the Character of a right Communicant? This is it, that ye renounce your own, and trust to his Righteousness, and take the Sacrament for a confirmation of your interest in it : If ye come thus, ye shall be welcome, for this Ordinance is appointed for this very end : if ye be not to Communicat, this word of the Gospel comes to you : though ye have secluded your selves from the Sacrament, either  
thorow



thorow Ignorance or scandal: It might be a sweet Communion to you, If yet Christ get a welcome, and it should, I assure you in his Name, make way to a new communion here or in Heaven. But *Fourthly*, I would a little mote particularly beseech you to consider, that ye must either give Christ a welcome or not, a yea or a nay say, a grant or a denial, for there is no mean or middle: This day shall not pass and go by without a hit or a miss (to speak so) Christ will not knock at your door, and nothing follow or be done: It will either be, that Christ was at such a time (ruzed or) commended, and made offer of, and his People would have none of him: or that the heart opened as the heart of *Lydia* unto the Lord, and that Salvation came to the Soul, as it did to *Zacheus* his house: your time is but short and uncertain, Ye know not if ye shall come another Sabbath to hear: some that now speak to you, and some that hear are dayly removed: And this bids you make haste to creep in to him quickly without longer delay, while his armes are stretched out to receive and embrace you: There are several sorts among you, that keep at a distance from Christ: but I would have all of you soberly to think, whether ye will say *Yea* or *Nay*: There is here what may silence and satisfy any Soul that thwarts with the call of God: Can ye say, that there is any better bargain, any better security, or any heartier call and invitation? *Let us come and reason together saith the Lord (Isaiah 1. 18, 19)* Though your sins be as *Crimson*, they shall be as white as *Snow*, though they be red as *Scarlet*, they shall be as *Wool*: if ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land, but if ye refuse and rebel ye shall be destroyed. Our Lords Blood is of that efficacy, that it can make *Crimson* and *Scarlet-coloured* sins, white, white as *Snow* and *Wool*: Why do ye then linger, stick, stand or halt?

Ye will, it may be, *Object* and say. *First*, I would fain come, if I durst: but Consider, I pray you, that it's Christ and the Covenant, and Grace on the Throne that call you: and this is their voice, *Thou hast spoken and done evil as thou couldest, yet return unto me: and therefore fear and tremble, yet come: fear and bring your sins with you to the Fountain to be washen, and to a skirt of his love, to be covered thereby: and you shall on your coming be cleansed and covered.* But it may be, ye will *Next Object* and say, I would fain come, but I cannot come, for *Answer*, Let me ask you, Is there a Soul in hell this day that can say I would fain have come and could not come? That which we seek of you is, to make no long, tedious or toilsome Voyage, if there be honesty: it's only, that **when Christ is come to you ye will be willing to receive him, and if ye thus come, ye are Believers: Do not, I beseech you, mistake, in thinking (and thereby obstructing your own coming) that persons must first be Believers and then come to Christ, No, but first ye must come with the little glimmering that ye have, and lame as ye are, and it will go with you; his Chariot is waiting for you, and the very Cripplest of you that cannot come of your selves to Christ; if ye be willing to close with him on his own terms, He shall come to you**

But it's like, some will in the *Third place*, *Object* and say, *Alace, I am very indisposed to come.* For *Answer* I shall grant, it may indeed be true: but yet consider who are invited, it's the *Poor, Blind, Halt, Maimed, Wretched and Miserable: O what unfitness have such! and yet none of them are excepted against: I would have none to be presumptuous and vain: but if indeed ye would fain come, ye cannot come so indisposed*



ed, as the bargain will on that account be cast: It will not be the want of a Disposition that shall cast it, else the *Cripple* and *Blind*, and *Luke warm Laodiceans* had never been invited: whether is a suitable disposition of your own making or of Christs? Sure it's of his: and can ye expect ought from him without coming to him, or Believing in him? But *Fourthly*, Some will Object and say, Alace I have often come and broken away again, How can I then Believe that I am invited? For Answer, I would desire you to Consider, whether that Objection tends, Even to question the truth of the Gospel; our Lord Jesus saith, *He came to save sinners*, and ye say I would fain know if that be true or not; if ye be *Poor, Blind, Miserable, Naked, &c.* And have need, He commands us to invite and call such; and it's the way of unbelief to make them scare at Christ and stand furthest aback from him, who have most need to draw near to him; if ye have come and broken afterward, Come again: and where a knot hath not holden, cast a new one: But alace! There is a sort of Careless Atheists and secure Hypocrites, whom this Gospel strikes dead: and carnall worldlings, who have no serious thoughts of what is coming: I would pose such, and ask you, Care ye for your Souls? care ye for Remission of sins? Or care ye for the enjoying of God? If ye do, then sure, it is unspeakably of your concernment to consider and close with the call & offer of this Gospel: And if there be any of you, that have loved your Idols, and after them will go, I would desire you in soberness to say to it, will ye prefer any Idol to Christ, the Creature to the Creator, the temporal finfull being of your body to the Eternall well-being of both Soul and Body? If ye will, then be sure, that this Conviction, in your Judgement and Conscience, will go along with

such a cursed Resolution, that Christ and Heaven were the absolutely best Bargain.

The *Third Use* Serves to *Cheer* and *Solace* sinners, that have betaken themselves to Christ; O All ye who are glad to hear tell of such a Saviour, and whose heart is even now content to take him & to Renounce all Idol for his sake: We have, *First*; Remission of sins, Not only to offer, but even to proclaim freely to you; *He that believes is past from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation: There is no Condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, as it is Rom. 8. 1.* If ye say, what will become of the sins that we are now under the guilt of? I answer, they shall be freely forgiven: in those days and at that time (saith the Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy Chap. 50. 20.*) *The Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will Pardon them whom I re-serve:* When all the books shall be cast open, there shall be nothing found to Charge upon a Believing Elect, *It's God that justifieth, who shall condemn?* sin as Pardoned to you it was to *Abraham* and to *David*: and Heaven is made as sure to you, as it was to them, who are now in it: ye have the same Surety, the same Saviour, the same Covenant. *Secondly*, What Promise would ye have? I know ye need many; but is there any of all the Promises that is not in the Covenant? Yea, ye have the Covenant and Christ both, for *He is given for a Covenant to you, All things are yours, (as it is, 1 Cor. 3.) Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world, or Life or Death, or things present or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christs; Ye have a title and right to all the Promises, and may comfort yourselves in the assured hope of the Performance* of



of them: O! That many were in capacity to receive this consolation. *Thirdly*, There may be a wearisome time here, and who knows what tryals and Scatterings may overtake you, What times may go over you, ere ye get another Communion? It were best then, that ye who seriously mind to cleave to Christ and his Covenant, were making for them: and therefore lay up this Consolation, O Believers, Comfort your selves in this Blessed bargain, ye have Christ and Remission of sins, take the Sacrament as a Seal thereof: There is a day coming, when ye will drink it new in the Kingdom of Heaven; O cheer your selves in the hope of it, and for the time in this Resemblance of it, when ye see a poor man personating our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his warrant offering him to you: The day is coming when there shall be no Resemblance, no Temple, no Ministers, no Ordinances, no Sacrament: but ye shall drink of that new wine, the grapes whereof grow on Christ Jesus the *Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God*, Even the wine of the Consolation of Glory, that will keep you in a continuall Holy Ravishment, when all fears shall be wiped away, and ye shall have fully Satisfying Blessedness in the Immediat vision and fruition of God: And since it is so, *Let the joy of the Lord be your strength*: There shall not a Believer come to the Lords Table this day, but there is a day coming when he and she shall drink it new, without interruption Eternally, in the Kingdome of Heaven: *Father* (saith Christ, *John 17.*) *I will, that these whom thou hast given me, may be with me, where I am, to Behold my Glory: and again, the Glory which thou gavest me I have given them: and saith he, Revel. 3. 12. I will write upon him my new Name, and the Name of the City of my God, &c.* That is, the Communication and Participation of the Glory of

of the head, as the Members are Capable. Labour, O Labour to have your Appetits Sharpened and your longing desires quickened to taste of this new wine: It will be fresh, strong and sweet there: And seeing the Lord allows you such consolation, take it, and take the Sacrament as a Pledge of it: and think with thy self, O Believer in Christ, what shall I, sinfull and unworthy I, ere long sit with Christ at his Table in Glory? and is this a signe and Representation of it under a vail? *What manner of person ought I to be in all Holy Conversation and Godlines?* ought I not to love him much, and to continue with him in all his Tentations. The Kingdom will Superabundantly make up all: The very first draught of this new Wine will make sighing and Sorrow for ever to flee away: Let your Souls be comforted in what ye have, and in the expectation of what is coming. There are great things coming; ye have a Rich and liberall, a free and frank bestower, and notably good Security. Come therefore all of you to the due use-making of the Covenant and of the Sacrament in reference to this end. And the Lord himself, that calls you, enable you to come aright, that it may be a closed, Sealed, and confirmed bargain betwixt him and you this day, that ye may have ground to say, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will be glad and rejoyce in it,*

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A Thanks-



A Thanks-giving Sermon after the Communion,  
the last that ever the Author Preached,  
on such an occasion, at Glasgow.

On *Matth. 26. Vers. 29.*

*But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of  
this fruit of the Vine, untill that day, when I drink  
it new with you in my Fathers Kingdom.*

## S E R M O N II.

OUR Blessed Lord Jesus is now near taking leave of  
his Apostles, and preparing them for the storm  
they were to meet with; and for the consolation of  
them and of all his followers to the end of the World,  
He instituteth this Ordinance of the Communion, to  
be His Love-token in His absence; that all his People  
might be confident of his respect to them, as well as to  
those then Present; and that all of them might thereby  
be put and kept in the Remembrance of him, till his  
coming again.

He hath given them a *Massie* and marrowy Sum of  
the Gospel in the words immediately Preceeding; *This  
Cup* (saith he) *is my Blood of the New Testament shed  
for the Remission of the sins of many; To which he sub-  
joyns, partly for warning, partly for Consolation, these  
now read, But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth  
of the fruit of the Vine, till I drink it new with you in my  
Fathers Kingdom; as if he had said, though now we be  
living*

sitting here at the Communion-Table heartsomely together, I tell you, that I and ye will have no more Communion here on earth; The particle *But* is to give them a watch-word; and yet according to his blessed manner and wont, he hath the best word hindmost, and tells them glad news on the back of it; For they might say, Wo's us, sweet Master, will we never meet again at a Communion? think not so, saith he; we shall yet meet again and have a sweet Communion in Heaven: This then is a very heartsome dismiss: though he sends them away, advertising them of a storm coming, and though they knew not well what was before them; yet he heartens and encourages them with a Promise, that they shall have this Wine new, or the thing signified by it, with a far other relish, in Glory: and that then he and they should have good days of it: I shall say no more to the exposition, scope, or Division of the words. Take this one Doctrine from them, and then a few things on the Connexion, for Use.

The great Doctrine, Then, implied is this, That Believers will have a sweet Communion in Christs Fathers Kingdom, in Heaven. This is Expressly in the Text, and confirmed by other Scriptures, as namely, Luke 22. 29. *Ye are they that have continued with me in my Temptations, and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: That ye may eat and Drink at my Table in my Kingdom: This is that Communion, even a partaking of Christs Glory in his Fathers Kingdom, and with him in it; and John 17. vers. 22. The Glory which thou gavest me I have given them; and vers. 24. Father I will that they whom thou hast given me may be with me to Behold my Glory, which thou hast given me; which words set forth, not only the certainty of the thing; a glorious place and day, and the excellency*



lency of the Feast, but also a sort of Peremptoriness in reference thereto, *Father I will*, saith he: when he Prayed, that the Cup might depart from him, he does it Conditionally and with submission; but when he prays for Communion in Glory to him and his followers, there is no Submission (to speak so) because it was according to the Covenant of Redemption, and therefore he is absolut and Holily peremptory in it, *And the Father hears him alwayes*: So in the Epistles written to the seven Churches of *Asia*, Rev. 2. and 3. It is Promised by our Lord, to him that overcometh, that he will give him the hidden *Manna*, the white stone, and New Name; to sit with him on his Throne: Let all Believers on earth be gathered together, they cannot tell what this is, what a *Manna* what a *Communion* this will be; it quite transcends all experience, all expression and conception: Only in the Text 'tis called, 1. *Wine*, which is a very cordiall thing, 'tis *Meat indeed and Drink indeed*. 2. It's called *new Wine*; we taste of it here, but it's new and hath another relish there. 3. 'Tis in a sweet place, not in any Earthly house or upper Chamber, not in a material Temple made with hands, but in Christs Fathers Kingdom, that *new Jerusalem*, that *Tabernacle of God*, where God dwelleth with Angels and Glorified Saints; the City paved with pure Gold; the Gates whereof are Pearl; the foundations of the Wall whereof are garnished with all manner of Precious stones; which hath no Sun, but the Glory of God and of the Lamb is the light thereof. O Believers, who have some of you, but Cot-houses, smoky holes here, ye shall have Mansions of Glory there, admirably good accomodation: it is with excellent & non such company, even with Christ; For he says, that He will drink this wine new with us in his Fathers Kingdom. It's a great matter to get leave

fit down with *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, David* and the Prophets *Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel*, and the rest of them; with *John the Baptist, with Paul, John, Peter*, and the other Apostles, and with the whole *Congregation of the first-born*; but it's more; to drink the new wine with Christ himself, in heaven, who is (to say so) the very heart of Heaven. This Communion hath in it these *Five* notable qualifications. *First*, It's immediat: all our Communion here is mediat, Ordinances and Ministers interveen and come betwixt us and him; and there is need of Faith in order to it; but in that Communion above, there is no intermediat mean, there we shall see his face, as it's said, *Rev. 22. 4.* There, is no Temple, no Ministers, no Preaching, no light of candle or Sun there, but the Lamb and the Lord God who enlightens it; the Tabernacle of Ordinances will then be taken down, every thing which is in part will be done away, when that which is perfect is come; *The Lord shall feed, and the Lamb shall lead us by these living waters.* Secondly, There is in it a sharing of the same Glory with the Mediator, He and we shall drink of one Cup, sit at one Table, and sit on one Throne, *Rev. 3. 21.* We shall partake of Christs Glory: *I will (saith he) John 17. 24. that they Behold my Glory*; there we get eminently *The new Name and the Name of the City of Christs God, Rev. 3.* there his Name will be in our fore-heads, *Rev. 22. 4.* And our vile bodies will be made conformable to Christs Glorious Body, *Phil. 3. 21.* Our spirits will be made pure as he is pure; when we shall be raised in incorruption, we shall bear the Image of the Heavenly Adam, and our bodies shall be made *Spiritual*: It cannot be told what this will be, to be made Partakers of Christs Glory, when the fulness of the God head shall be Communicated



nicated to us Objectively, and when God shall be *all in all*. *Thirdly*, It's a Communion satisfieing compleatly; If Christs Communion be full, ours shall be full; in this Communion none shall complain of desertion, none shall desire more of the Spirit, or more consolation; for it shall be full; then shall we Satisfieingly know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God; this water of Life will Satisfie to the full the greatest thirst of such as long for Christ; there shall not be (to speak so) an empty Corner in the most capacious Soul; thou Poor hungry and thirsty, Empty and indigent Believing Soul shalt then be full and keeped full (according to Creature capacity) to the very Brim; and thy heart that is now narrow and straitned, shall be widened and enlarged then, to take in this sweet and Satisfieing: there shall not be one vessel in Glory, but it shall be filled brimfull with the new Wine of these strong Consolations of God, being dilated, Capacitated, Elevated and enlarged for that very end. *Fourthly*, This Communion is uninterrupted, there shall be nothing to mar it, no Cross, no Sin, no Temptation to sin, For no unclean thing enters within the Gates of the *new Jerusalem*, no Curse no Cry in those Streets, no weeping, no Sorrow, no fighting for any thing past, nor Horrour nor fear from the apprehension of any evil coming: nor any the least mis turning of the Lambs Song of Praise; the heart shall (to speak so) be so stringed and bended, as it shall never again slack in its bent, but be stil keeped at its highest note, our Harps shall never hang any more on the Willows, but we shall keep them still in our hand chanting the Praises of the Redeemer to that new Heavenly Tune never heard on earth, with Psalmes of victory in our hands and Crowns of Glory on our heads, following

following the Lamb whithersoever He goes. *Fifthly*, It is an Eternall communion, we shall drink for ever with him and be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house, and made Holily drunk with the River of his pleasures, with whom is the Fountain of Life, and in whose light we shall eminently see light; whose Well of life is always running, in whose presence is fulness of joys, and at his right hand Pleasures for evermore; though through all Eternity thousands and Millions will be drinking of this new Wine, yet it shall never be the less, but is and shall be still fresh and flowing.

Now for *Application*; Let me ask you, do ye believe this, that there is such a day coming, and that these are the true and Faithfull sayings of God? O! If ye all that hear me this day did indeed believe it; the belief of it, sure, is very suitable and would make a very sweet life; ye will never be Holy, ye will never aright fear nor love God, ye will never hate sin, nor be heartsome in his Service, neither will ye be truly thankful, till ye really Believe it: I am afraid, if Atheists, Earthly Wretches, drunkards, Tipplers, Cursers, Swearers, Hypocrites, &c. Were singled out and Separated from among us, they would be found to be but a smal number who Believe this: Do ye or can ye Believe it, that have your Portion in this life, and seek no more? Nay, believers, if ye indeed Believe it, why are ye so heartless? Why envy ye the poor prosperity of the men of the world? Why do ye not press after this mark and Prize? If ye believed it suitably, your hearts would laugh within you, your Spirits would rejoice, your faces would some way shine; and what is spoken of this day, would have a Divine splendor and lustre in your eyes; If you believe it, why is it not your work and business to live so, as ye may, hope to drink of this cup of this new Wine with



with Christ in Heaven? Though ye should drink water all your days, this Wine will abundantly compensate that; though now the bread of some of you be but brown, this feast of truly Royal dainties is before you: our Christian friends that are gone are feeding sweetly on it. Long, O Believers to be with them, and take it not ill, though ye be here somewhat straitned and kept scarce, and have but a little portion, a small pittance and scant measure of the things of this world, when others fare well and Sumptuously, live high, are Gorgiously apparelled: Your Feast and Royal Robes are before you. The Rich and great men of this world, whose portion is in this life care little for Poor bodies that seek God: care ye as little for their portion as they care for yours; they shall not, a little hence, get a drink, nay not a drop of cold water, when ye shall drink this new Wine, this Royal wine in abundance: *Christs Servants shall eat, when they shall be hungry, his servants shall drink when they shall be thirsty: they shall sing for joy of heart, when the others shall mourn and howl for vexation of spirit: as it is Isaiah 65. 13.* O seek after clearness of interest in him, that ye may thoroughly Believe, Love, and long for this life. This heartsome Communion with Christ in Heaven is reserved for them that keep Communion with him here on earth, and to them it is here promised: I will not say, that none can get Heaven, but those who get the Sacrament: but this I dare boldly say, that those who have not Communion with Christ here, shall never get Communion with him hereafter: and whoever Communicat honestly here shall have Communion with Christ in Glory: be ye comforted who believe in Christ, who Covenant honestly with him, and who hope in his mercy, For He and ye together shall have a compleatly full, immediat, uninterrupted and

and eternal Communion in Heaven, that shall never  
 end. Need ye to be confirmed in the truth of this? His  
 word may serve you, and ye have the Sacrament before  
 he hath left his word to hearten poor Believers under  
 all their inward and outward troubles, under their Spi-  
 ritual maladies and bodily sicknesses and infirmities, and  
 to assure them for their comfort that there is a good  
 life coming, and he hath given the Sacrament as a pledge  
 of it: will ye then consider seriously, whether this word  
 belong to you, and if ye may with his allowance hearten  
 your selves from it, that there is a day coming that  
 ye shall get Communion with Christ in Heaven: He  
 doth not mean, that all that get the Sacrament get the  
 Communion, For Judas, who not unprobably got the  
 Sacrament, is excluded. Would ye know then, who  
 have been honest Communicants to day, that may ex-  
 pect this Heavenly Communion? And me thinks, that  
 every one of you, that hath any serious concern for your  
 Souls, will be roused here, and greedily longing for  
 marks and evidences of that. But if any of you would  
 be at evidences to make you secure, I declare I have  
 none such to give you: But I shall hint at *Two* or *Three*  
 which may be as directions in duty to you who mind  
 honestly: The *First* whereof is, *Luke 22. 29. Ye are*  
*they that have continued with me in my Temptation, and*  
*I appoint unto you a Kingdom:* here it is clear, that the  
*Two* go together, viz. Continuing with Christ in his  
 temptations, and Coming to his Kingdom: In a word  
 it is not to be religious for the fashion, but in earnest:  
 it is not to be Religious for a day or two, or in some  
 trials only, but to continue in it, and with him in his  
 Temptations, what ever they be: Not only to be Re-  
 ligious, when religion is countenanced, but when it is  
 discountenanced, and persecution is met with for his  
 sake



sake, and when there are many snares and temptations  
 to draw you away; 'tis a stedfast abiding with Christ  
 in trying times, Summer and Winter so to say: If a  
 blast of triall and temptation come, and ye grow giddy  
 and wavering in the truth, Or if a spirit of Profanity  
 come (and look for it, and lay your account with it)  
 and ye be ready to laugh and give in your taunt, gybe,  
 and mock with the Prophane, against the power of  
 Godliness and the Godly; away with your Religion, it  
 is not a continuing with Christ in his Temptations:  
 This mark puts you to work (and such marks are fast-  
 est,) *To him that overcometh*, is a word often repeated,  
 Rev. 2. and 3. and set always before the Promise of  
 Glory and Communion with Christ in Heaven: On such  
 and on such only will Christ write his new Name, and  
 set them on His Throne. A Second Mark is, Ye that do  
 indeed keep Communion with Christ here and war a-  
 gainst your lusts, without any allowed peace, truce or  
 cessation of Armes, till ye get them brought down, rout-  
 ed and ruined by an entire victory, shall partake of this  
 Communion in Glory: If ye do not deliberately give  
 up with Christ to keep company with Idols, ye may  
 have hope: but *the unbelieving and fearfull*, that cannot  
 endure to look a Lust nor a tryall for Christ in the face:  
 and who, it may be, are just now wearying of such a  
 day and Sermon, and it is even as a prison to them to be  
 restrained so long from worldly businesses and pleasures,  
 are utterly excluded from all hope, while they remain  
 such. Serious Souls will, belike, here say, we are fighting,  
 but we come not speed; I Answer, Let not that dis-  
 courage you, if there be hope to come speed in end;  
 continue in the fight, and you shall come speed; Christ  
 is thy Captain and a Captain of Salvation, at whose  
 back none fell, so as not to arise. A Third Mark is, John  
 17. 6. 7.

17. 6. 7. 8. Where Christ is Praying for the Disciples that they may be admitted to this Communion, and saith he, *I gave them the words which thou gavest me and they have received them*; The Believer receives Christs words and keeps them, and makes exception against none of them; when he takes one word, he casts not at another; he takes not one piece of the Covenant of Grace and rejects another; but universally he approves and accepts of all Christs words, and more particularly, and in a speciall manner, of the Command of believing; Thus speaks the Psalmist, *Psal. 119. 128. I esteem all thy Commandments concerning all things to be right*; So saith Christ of the Disciples, *I have given them thy words and they have received them*; and particularly (as if he had said) I proposed a special suit to them, that they would be friends with thee, and be reconciled to thee through Faith in me; and they received that word, *Therefore Glorifie them*. Ye may possibly think these marks difficult, but would you have a Religion that will put you to no pains? Such marks are high and hard indeed to flesh and Blood, and to your lusts; but what loss is in mortifying these? Is it any prejudice to you to receive Christs words and to keep them, and to follow him in his temptations, when an hundred fold more then ye can lose is to be gotten by so doing? And therefore we declare to you from the word of the Lord, if ye resolve not to live, as having on you the wedding garment, we cannot say that ye shall eat and drink with Christ at his Table in his Kingdom.

In the Next place, According to the Method Proposed, Ye would consider the Connexion, and how the Purpose comes in; even thus, as if the Lord had said ye have now an excellent Communion-day; but ye are *I will have no more together in this World*; whence  
*Observe*



Observe, that the best Communion day that Gods People have here hath a BUT in it, or something that makes it appear defective; Only in that Communion in Heaven there is no But, no defect: And it implies. *First*, His laying to them, ye have now been at the Communion, but ere long ye shall meet with Temptation and trouble; and as he said, so within a very litle it came to pass. So may I say, we are here now, but do we know how soon a temptation may assault and prevail? The Tempter is waiting on and hath, it is like, given in his Petition for a Permission to essay such and such a person, by some suitable Temptation, ere to morrow; and he offers, it may be, to make his Hypocrisy to be discovered: and it will be a sad Matter, if any of you stumble and be overtaken with the temptation. *Secondly*, It looks to the scattering that was coming; we will not (as if we had said) be all together at the Communion again; For it is written, *I will smite the shepherd and the Sheep shall be scattered*. It is more then Probable that we shall not all drink and eat at one Table again; are there not some both Ministers and People dead and gone since the last Communion? And ye may want some of both, ere ye get another: and may there not some sad diversion, trouble or Confusion arise, to the offending of some and laying of them aside? Nay, some may be offended at these same Ordinances: Satan hath many ways to break in upon us: nay let me tell you, that a cloud of persecution may come and cover us, that we shall not dare to come, or may scruple to come to such an Ordinance, though we be now datted and (as it were) Dandled on his knee. *Thirdly*, It may look to their being deprived of Christs company and bodily presence. And who knoweth, but there may be a cloud of desertion on Ordinances, and a railing of Christs presence?

presence? I forewarn you that it is to be feared; which sayes, we should keep him well while we have him, and not stir him up till he please, as the Brides frequent desire and resolution is in the song. *Fourthly*, It may look to death that is coming, and will put an end to all Communion here: after which there will be no more Communion on Earth. And indeed, it is suitable, that ye were now bethinking your selves, what if we never get another? Ought we not then to feed well on this? If any thing have been amiss or wanting, Labour to get it made up: O Believers in Christ, take home a Sealed Covenant with you, and read it over and over again: If any defect hath been on your part, write it yet in: for if any black be, 'tis certainly on our side and not on Christs: and indeed, 'tis Gods great mercy, that a Seal of his Covenant may be usefull a long time after it is gotten: flighted Baptisms and abused Communion may be yet usefull; if we could make the right use of them: and I do not question but this Communion did the Disciples more good after Christ was gone from them, then it did now when he was with them at Table. *Fifthly*, It may look to Eternity. Now we are living men and women on Earth but within a litle, we will be gone, & our place will know us no more; very probably, within Twentie, Thirty, Fourty or Fifty years, we shall be either drinking of this new Wine in Heaven above, or of that Cup of the unmixed Wine of the wrath of God, having no rest day nor night. O Profane Atheist, unbeliever, hollow hearted Hypocrite, and slighter of Christ all thy dayes, what a bitter draught will that be, when God shall put into thy hand the Cup of his Indignation? which shall be for ever poured out unto thee, and shall never come from thy head. O drunkard, tippler, and belly God, bethink thy self, how that draught will



go down with thee: The Lord with his one foot on Earth and the other on the Sea, with an uplifted hand to Heaven, hath Sworn, that within a little, time shal be no more. Ye that are young People may, if ye will, follow the sight of your eyes and the way of your own hearts, and may take you Pleasure in the dayes of your youth, but know and remember that God will bring you to Judgement: Your time is wearing away, and ye will wear away: 'tis but a little, and ye will hear no more Preachings, and get no more warnings. O take them in time, if ye be wise, and the Lord perswade you so to do.

In the *Third* place, The scope both of the advertisement and consolation is observable, when he was giving them the Cup and told them, that *'tis the Cup of the new Testament in his blood*, He subjoins, *but I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth, &c.* This he doth, *First*, because he would send them away advertised and assured, that *There is a fater Ben* (to speak so) *a more inward room in Religion*, then the most lively and comfortable Ordinance here on earth doth afford: a higher & more intense spiritual Practice, then any outward part of Religion: He would have them to go away thinking with themselves, that all is not done that may be done, that all is not win<sup>d</sup> at, which may be had, that they are not yet Holy enough nor happy enough. O place not, for Christs sake, Place not your Religion here, I was at the Sacrament, or I got my Communion: Wo to that empty sound, and to them who lean all their weight on it: ye may come and abide here for a time, and go away leaving the marrow of the matter behind you: all is not yet done. A *Second Reason* is, Because he would have them parting and going from the Communion with some thoughts of death, of their approaching

ing change and passing out of time, and of Eternity in quickly Marching upon them: And indeed, *it were good going from the Communion, and from every other Ordinance, with such thoughts as these,* Death is fast coming on me, and I will be soon gone, (saith our Lord of the matter to the Disciples) and ye will ere long follow me, and it is not these Ordinances that will be your life in Eternity: It were good that we came to the Lord's Table, to Preaching and Prayer, and went away as dying Men and Women: this would lay much of our Pride, deaden us to the world, and make us endeavour to hold a loose gripe of all things in it, and would keep us under the kindly sense of the changeableness, uncertainty and short continuance of them all: and might be of more use and worth to us, then Twentie thanksgiving Sermons: Labour then to go from every Ordinance, as if ye were not to enjoy another. A Third Reason may be, that our Lord would lead in his followers to look after some stamp of Heaven, and of the Glorious Communion that is a coming, on their Spirits, and would have them going from the Ordinances with such thoughts. Alace! we have very few such thoughts, Our conversation is very little or not at all in Heaven: Believers think and think often, that these rags will be rent off us, and we shall be set down on the Throne with Christ in that Rayment of needle work. It is a good token, when a person goes from a Communion, from Preaching and Prayer, more Divine and Heavenly, making every Ordinance the step of a stair (as it were) to ascend upward, having a high esteem of Heaven, and a holy eager and bent on it, content, nay desirous to be gone, when ever He shall see it meet: and till the putting on and keeping on the whole armour of God, making for one assault of temptation after another.

Heaven



Heavenly in his whole walk, in his actions words and thoughts. As ye would not, O Believers, interrupt your Communion with God in Christ, study to be Heavenly in your Conversation: for saith the Apostle, *Phil. 3. 20. Our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour: Lay aside (as if he had said) your earthly mindedness, away with that; and be Heavenly in your conversation; for our Conversation is such; and Believers are described to be such as Love Christs appearing. A Fourth Reason May be, that our Lord would hearten & Comfort his Disciples and send them away refreshed; Yea it is, to Root out their unbelief, and to arm them against approaching tryals: So then, First. our Lord Jesus Allows Believers to go from the Communion, and proportionally, from every Ordinance rightly come to, cheerfull and Comforted; and therefore he leaves them with this word, telling them that they will have hard and sad days; but withall bids them cheer themselves in the assured expectation of a day coming, when He and they shall drink the Wine new in Heaven: Our Lord would have Believers humble, thinking on Death and making ready for it dayly; yet he would not have them tortured with the thoughts of it, but cheerfull, as having his joy for their strength; though he would not have their joy carnal, but Heavenly: And it is the Token of a right Communicant and of a good hearer of the word, when a Person goes away from it more Spiritually cheered and more Heavenly minded. Secondly, There is nothing that can be more heartsome, cheering and refreshing to the Believer, then the lively hope of Communion and of a seat on the Throne, in Heaven with Christ; and it is the mark and Character of a believer, to have no lower designe. Alace! for the senseless way of hearing*

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the word and of Communicating customary to many, who have no other nor higher designe, then to partake of the outward Ordinance: 'tis a heartsome thing to go from the Table of the Lord with this sweet and Heavenly Meditation, Christ and I will meet again ere long at a table in Heaven. *Thirdly, The thoughts of Heaven and the hope thereof may well sustain a Believer, were there never so many BUTS and wants in their present condition here: We will not be long together, saith He, there will be a scattering; but this may keep you from weeping and mourning as those who have no hope, that the day cometh when we shall meet again, and never, part asunder: It is really a wonder, that we have so few serious and solacing thoughts of coming to Heaven: there are none who look for a Rich loading, coming home by Sea, but they will comfort themselves in the expectation of it; why do we not then comfort our selves in the thoughts of Heaven, since we profess to have a hope of being there? even because we are carnal and earthly: and it sayes, that we either think Heaven litle worth, or that it is an insufficient and unvalid right, that is to be had to it, or that we do not really believe it: all the silver and gold in the world comforts not a poor body, because he hath no hope to come by it; So there are not a few hearers of the Gospel, who hear much of Heaven and of the hope of it, that never refresheth them. A Fifth Reason may be to waken up longing desires, and to sharpen and put an edge upon an appetite, in his followers, after Heaven, and to teach them not to place their happiness in any thing on this side Heaven: otherwise he would never have put their Satisfaction to a term so far off: but he overleaps (to speak so with reverence) all the brave days, that they had and were to have here, and gives them this*  
for



for their full satisfaction, that the day is a coming when he will drink the Wine new with them in his Fathers Kingdom: and would have them in their flight, never resting nor sitting down, till they be there; For he sends them away hungering for that Communion-Table: And we would yet again exhort and beseech you to study to be in case to go from the Communion and from every Sermon, having some serious thoughts of Heaven and longings for it; believing that the day, the joyfull day is coming, when Christ and ye will meet and never shed or separat again: when ye shall be with him, where he is, and be set with him at his Table, and on his Throne, never to rise off it any more again: Blessed be God, that that desirable day is coming. Believers in Christ, cheer your selves in the hope of it: If there be any of you (as Alace! I fear there be very many) that relish not this blessed change, there is a sad and Sorrowful change before you. O be busie, very busie to have your interest in Christ, and the hope of Heaven well secured, by Union and Communion with him here; that so ye may have the well grounded hope of Heaven, and may frequently draw Comfort from it: And, O that we could sunder so. The litle inch and moment of time, that we have, will soon and very quickly wear away, and be at an end: Go then, my dear friends, with this well fixed resolution, that ye must needs, in Gods own way, have Heaven and be eternally happy in the Soul-satisfieing and ravishing enjoyment of that fullest and sweetest, never to be interrupted Communion, that will be there: And thank God and Christ the Mediator for the least measure of the well grounded hope of it; and make it your business to have your Conversation suited to and smelling strong of that blessed hope.

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